

ALFRED CHARLES WILLIAM HARMSWORTH
Viscount Northcliffe of St. Peter in the County of Kent
CHIEF PROPRIETOR OF THE TIMES 1908-1922
After a painting in oils by P. A. de László

# THE HISTORY OF



# THE TWENTIETH CENTURY TEST

1884 - 1912





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#### INTRODUCTION

THE third volume of The History of The Times makes its appearance eight years after its predecessor, the length of the interval having been dictated by the incidence of war. The first volume told the story of the paper's foundation and of the pioneer years, in which, under two great journalists, John Walter II and Thomas Barnes, it battled its way to economic independence and political freedom, mutually and inseparably linked, and won a position of paramountcy among the newspapers of that day. The second volume was devoted to the long reign of John Walter III—the Chief Proprietor who, while sparing no innovation to maintain the paper's supremacy in the technique of production, held decisively, in an age which saw the beginnings of "popular" competition, to the high standard of journalism he had inherited, and Delane the editor who matured the authority to which he succeeded and extended the influence and reputation of the paper at home and oversea.

It is the purpose of the pages which follow to trace the fortunes of *The Times* in an era that confronted it with difficulties wholly novel in degree if not in kind. The tradition established during a century of almost unbroken success was to be subjected to new stresses and new trials in a testing-time of unexampled severity. The paper itself was destined to come within sight of total shipwreck, and indeed the whole account of the escape from disaster is not compassed within the years comprised in

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the present volume. The practice here, it may be added, as in previous volumes, has been to present the record with unconditional candour. Nothing material and relevant that research has been able to disclose in the archives of Printing House Square or elsewhere has been withheld.

The story of these years begins dramatically with the episode of the Parnell Commission. The strength of the case presented in the articles on "Parnellism and Crime" and other articles that followed them is often forgotten. Naturally enough it was generally held to be vitiated altogether by the false evidence contributed by the forger Pigott. Nor in the contemporary heat and bitterness of party politics was the whole record of The Times in Irish affairs likely to be remembered. It had in the past continually made itself the mouthpiece of Irish aspirations and grievances from the day of Catholic emancipation onwards. Its Irish policy derived fundamentally from its view of what was essential to Imperial security, and that security it believed essential to the balance of power supporting peace. For a long period its defence of the Union ranked it on one side of politics, moving it some distance from Delane's leftcentre position and from the left or left-centre line so vigorously taken by Barnes.

The burden laid upon the finances of the paper by the costs of the Special Commission amounted to a catastrophe, the consequences of which gravely beset its approach to the twentieth century. At a time when, if ever, it should have been able to count upon large resources enabling it to modernize its equipment and to take all measures necessary to meet new requirements and new competition, the paper found itself with grievously straitened means. Moreover, a tradition long fortified by success, while inspiring the utmost devotion to the paper in the staff and safeguarding

the quality and integrity of its contents, could prove restrictive of legitimate innovation. If there was a handicap in a certain inflexibility of habit, there was an even greater peril in the rigidity and intricacy of the constitution which the will of John Walter I bequeathed to his posterity. Its power to promote dissension and to paralyse action lay practically dormant during the time of prosperity, but it was evoked with powerful effect by the encroachments of poverty.

Time was certain to bring all these difficulties to a head. That the hour of emergency was staved off for nearly thirty years and that, when it came, it was surmounted with the least harm to essentials must be chiefly ascribed to the devotion and energy of one man. The heroic labours of Moberly Bell come to their climax in the outcome of the undeclared competition of Pearson and Harmsworth, to speak of no others, for the control of *The Times*. It is a dramatic, not to say melodramatic, chapter which describes the steps by which the paper was taken out of Pearsons' grasp and its control won for a purchaser whose moves were veiled for the time in the deepest secrecy.

With the arrival of Lord Northcliffe at the seat of authority the financial perils that had immediately menaced the very existence of *The Times* were at an end. What was still doubtful was the survival of all that the staff valued most in its inheritance. Though the newcomer, a journalist through and through, had a profound and lifelong respect for the journal, and came pledged to preserve its character, it was still a question, to say the least, whether he had the understanding of its essence that would halt the necessary revolution in its working at a point short of irreparable evil. The tradition itself, not least in the persons of the leading members of the staff, proved in the end resistant enough, but that story is not completed in these pages. Yet the balance can

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be struck. On the practical service which this man of genius rendered to the paper the verdict of the *History* may profitably be cited here.

To him *The Times* owes its transformation from a bankrupt nineteenth century relic into a flourishing twentieth century property. To him the paper owes its being as a national daily newspaper . . . *The Times* would have foundered without him. Northcliffe alone had the genius. It was he, his work, his inventions, and his changes that alone re-established the property.

In spite of increasing domestic embarrassments there was no sacrifice of standards in the paper, least of all in the realm of foreign policy. Buckle's strong sense of continuity was a standing guarantee of the care lavished on the leading articles. With him worked, in the foreign field, a succession of able men whose names are part of the history of journalism—Donald Mackenzie Wallace, Valentine Chirol, William Lavino, George Saunders, G. E. Morrison, H. S. de Blowitz, Wickham Steed, D. D. Braham and many more. Having strengthened itself internally by the reorganization of its Foreign Department, *The Times* pursued its way as an independent commentator, sometimes with the assent of the official world, sometimes without it.

In the present volume the shadow of Germany falls more and more heavily across the course of world politics. Before the last chapter is reached the scene is nearly set for the conflict that opened in August 1914 and was to endure with one uneasy intermission until August 1945. In the developments of opinion and policy that preceded the cataclysm, *The Times*, on the evidence of German and other statesmen, figured with undiminished authority and vigour. Succeeding pages present much of the tale of that long and complex diplomatic evolution. But it is right to interpose at this point the caution offered in previous volumes. *The* 

History of The Times makes no claim or attempt to be a complete register and interpreter of events. It is concerned with them as they illustrate and describe the purpose and motives of the paper from time to time and the extent or effect of its participation in affairs. Its own contribution to history will be found in the account of the inner workings of policy, the confidential exchanges between the office and its correspondents abroad, or between members of the staff and responsible Ministers and officials, British or foreign, which is furnished here from letters and memoranda preserved in the archives of Printing House Square.

Notwithstanding German complaints to the contrary, The Times, among all the difficulties created in the era after the fall of Bismarck by the incalculable impulses of the Kaiser, the levity of Bülow, and the more sinister consistency of Holstein, sought a line of sober forbearance. It was willing that Britain should be the friend of Germany, though not its dupe. It endeavoured for as long as it could to meet the German drive for colonial and naval expansion with patience and understanding. But the years of splendid isolation were over. It was clear that Britain could not stand alone, and when it also became clear that no understanding with Germany was possible except on German terms and at German dictation, the paper gave warm support to the Government of the day in the effort to establish a new equilibrium, a new foundation of peace in Europe, through the entente with France and an accord with Russia. It owed much in those days to the correspondents who served it abroad, and especially to its Berlin correspondent, George Saunders. Saunders's intimate knowledge of the Reich and its people was backed by outstanding independence and courage. At the turn of the century it was his thankless duty, faithfully discharged, at times in face of determined efforts of varying kinds to silence him, to temper hopes of an Anglo-German rapprochement with a factual study from day to day of the inconsistencies between German official professions and the subtle encouragement within the Reich of that popular hostility towards Britain which helped to support the burden of the naval programme.

Throughout all these turns of politics and diplomacy the mainspring of the paper's policy was still the maintenance of the Empire and of its mission in the world. The decisive shift in the balance of the Far East effected by the rise of Japan, and later tested and proved in the Russo-Japanese war, demanded the new diplomatic dispositions for the stability of that area and for Imperial security which were represented in the Anglo-Japanese alliance. Security in Europe was yet to seek, though, where the present volume ends, there was still hope for it in the new alignment of forces. In the end, though it failed as a preventive of war, it was still to justify the foresight of its authors as the means of victory and survival.

For the convenience of the reader it has been decided to postpone to Volume IV, which will include other Far Eastern matters, the naval question, and the Washington Conference, and the account of the contribution made by *The Times* to Anglo-American relations.

The writing of the pages that follow has been the work of members of the staff who were appointed to the task in 1931. The death, referred to in Volume III, of George Earle Buckle deprived the writers of a colleague whose life had been spent in the service of the paper during the period covered by the present volume. It is greatly regretted that Buckle died when the writing of this volume had made only slight progress, but he worked on the material that forms Chapters I and II. This material was put together while the second volume was being made

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ready for publication in 1939. Much of the detail of that volume was the work of Felix Theodore Fries, who came to the *History* staff in 1937 with the recommendation of the late Professor Temperley. In the intervals of service in the field, Fries made valuable contributions to this volume. He died, much regretted, in 1942 at the age of 29. Harold Hannington Child, who died in 1945, was responsible for important suggestions, contributions and revisions in all three published volumes. He prepared the draft of the chapter on Lord Northcliffe that appears in this volume.

The resumption of war with Germany, which reduced the number of writers, also rendered obsolete the original plan made in 1938. It required the description, in detail, of the story of Anglo-German relations as reflected in the massive collection of papers that remain in Printing House Square. While that collection is not unfitted by bulk and importance to rank as of national value, a history of The Times based upon it alone would remain seriously incomplete without supplement from other collections. The national archives, however, are not available to the public until 50 years after their original date. As the work on the present volume was virtually begun in 1939, the help of private custodians or owners of contemporary papers for documentation of the period after 1889 was sought. The request met with a most generous response, as the List of Acknowledgments proves.

The compilation of the fourth volume of *The History* of *The Times*, bringing it down to the 150th anniversary of the paper in 1935, has been taken in hand. It is hoped to publish it, and thus to complete the work, within three years.

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Professor E. L. Woodward read the whole of the proofs and made valuable suggestions; but for all errors and omissions *The Times* remains responsible.

#### **CORRIGENDA**

Page

18, Footnote: for "Vol. I" read "Vol. II."

34, Footnote: for "104" read "40."

462, Footnote 1: for "469" read "468."

467, line 8: add "Asquith."

585, last line: after last word add full point.

593, line 24: for "be" read "he."

691, line 19: for "in to" read "into."

695, line 17: for "trôuées" read "trouées."

814, line 47: for "that" read "than."

822, line 26: for "1920" read "1927."

836, line 38: after "Germany" insert "was."

838, line 8 from foot: for "petro" read "petrol."

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#### G. E. BUCKLE, EDITOR FROM 1884

THE Editor's room is now entirely in the hands of young men, but I am confident they will all do well if only they have physique. Buckle is chief." With these words of introduction the Manager, John C. MacDonald, towards the end of February, 1884, announced the new Editor's appointment in a letter to a member of the staff.

George Earle Buckle, barrister of Lincoln's Inn, and Fellow of All Souls, was too young to have assured prospects at the Bar when he was offered, at the age of 25, the post of Assistant Editor. He had, however, solid qualifications for success in any profession —among them a fine physique for he stood six feet high—and an obvious capacity for hard intellectual work. He was born with Church interests as the son of a scholarly country clergyman, who had been a Fellow of Oriel and was the incumbent of the Oriel living of Twerton on Avon, near Bath. Buckle's Oriel connexion was not only through his father, for his mother was a sister of Professor Earle, another fellow of the College and professor of Anglo-Saxon. The long-lived Provost of Oriel, Hawkins, was also a connexion of the family. Canon Buckle had been a Fellow of Oriel College in the later days of the Oxford Tractarian Movement, and had, moreover, been one of the young dons who, under the inspiration of Newman, worked on the Early Fathers and historical theology. He is mentioned in the Apologia among the friends who went to take leave of the lost leader when, after his conversion, Newman was about to quit Oxford; others being R. W. Church (afterwards Dean of St. Paul's), Mark Pattison, and Pusey.

Buckle himself developed a firmly Protestant attitude that must have commended him to John Walter III, who never wavered from the position that "Popery is not a fit religion for an Englishman." His first school was Honiton Grammar School, and his second Winchester, where he was on the foundation. As a Wykehamist he went on as a scholar to New College, where, as the class lists show, he took honours, though not the highest, in classical and mathematical Moderations, but his strength lay

evidently in his historical interests. He took a first in Literae Humaniores and a first also in the school of Modern History. He added to this record the winning of the Newdigate Prize Poeman accomplishment of which he showed no trace in after life. Mandell Creighton, the historian, afterwards Bishop of London. who was one of his examiners in the History School, thought he perceived in his papers a capacity for journalism, and offered to recommend him to C. P. Scott, then in his early days as Editor of the Manchester Guardian and on the look-out for help from a promising Oxford graduate. But Buckle, as was rather the fashion at the time among ambitious men at Oxford, had his hopes fixed on the Bar and so was not attracted by the offer; and the only journalism he attempted while reading law consisted of writing occasional reviews and articles for the paper to which his father was a regular contributor, the London Guardian. He was called to the Bar by Lincoln's Inn in November, 1880, but, as he had then joined the editorial staff of The Times, he never practised.

No outside interest of Buckle's was allowed to interfere with his conception of his duties as Editor of The Times. Holding that in that capacity he might have to comment on the affairs of any institution or interest, he declined on principle to take part as a committee man or to sit on boards. His editorial conscience was thus left unfettered; but the effect of this abnegation was perhaps to make Buckle less well known in certain circles than he deserved to be. He was far advanced in years before he received any recognition from Oxford University as one of her more distinguished sons in letters and public life. Glasgow University however gave him the Hon. LL.D. much earlier. He was offered and declined, while still editor, a baronetcy from a retiring Prime Minister. The Times was his sole interest; he was its servant only. This was Buckle's greatest loyalty; and he had others—to his colleagues, to the west country, to his antecedents. Buckle's daily round was marked by punctual regularity. At a certain time in the evening he would come down to Printing House Square—this hour became earlier towards the close of his editorship—and look through the letters addressed to him either personally or in his capacity as Editor. He read all the letters he received, recognizing that though many of them would not be acceptable for publication, nearly all of them presented a point of view.

Dinner at home or, more usually, dining out, followed this first visit to the office; and this interval, unfortunately for one who had accustomed himself to a late return and to a late sitting, tended towards the end to be reduced. In the eighties, he was

#### BUCKLE'S OFFICE ROUTINE

back at 10 or thereabouts. He then gave instructions to leader writers, if they had not been instructed before; saw the printer's list, decided what must go in and what could be held over; and read and corrected proofs until the paper went to press. Then followed more new work, for there was ever a mass of important correspondence to be got through; and Buckle steadily got through it, writing each letter with his own hand, showing it perhaps to his assistant, who was engaged on correspondence of a more routine order, sealing it up himself, but keeping no record of it. Meanwhile his secretary was performing menial duties and had no idea of his chief's real correspondence. It was often said outside that the secrets of P.H.S. were well kept, and it was true-Buckle, for his part, saw to it that very few shared his counsels or his information. It was a mode of conducting business he had inherited from his predecessors. Buckle grew more and more fond of it; innovations, such as the direct use of the telephone, or through another's agency the typewriter, were never to his liking. It was usually nearer four than three in the morning when Buckle went home. During these labours, especially if it were a warm summer night, he might have consumed a couple of siphons of soda water—the only refreshment which he seemed to take or need in the office.

Judged by modern standards Buckle's method must seem to be old fashioned. But the paper itself was old fashioned, for there was no editorial control over its make-up beyond certain directions to sub-editors as to type and heading. The make-up itself depended on the printer, who arranged the columns as he found most convenient, subject only to Buckle's orders that this and this must go in. But all the proofs, it is safe to say, had been read by Buckle, and by his assistants also; and minute pains had been taken to see that the style of the paper, and its reputation for sound English, was maintained. Buckle also made it his business to know thoroughly the contents of any official document which might be summarized. His own power of rapid reading was remarkable; he could tear the heart out of any blue-book in a few minutes.

Buckle's family life was thoroughly happy. His first wife, by whom he had a son and a daughter, was the daughter of James Payn, the novelist, a woman of much charm and intellectual sprightliness. To Buckle's grief she died in 1898. After years of widowerhood he married his first cousin, Miss Beatrice Earle, daughter of his maternal uncle Professor Earle; it was a completely happy marriage and Mrs. Buckle was of no little help to him in his later literary work. When he was first married Buckle

lived in an old-fashioned house in Queen Square; afterwards in a flat in Ashley Gardens; then in a house in Warwick Square, and, after his retirement, in Oakley Street, Chelsea. On retiring in 1912 he made a trip to South Africa for the purpose of seeing one of his brothers, an architect there. For the rest of his life he was constantly resident in London. In retirement he was not idle: he completed Monypenny's "Life of Disraeli" and edited six volumes of "Queen Victoria's Letters." He became a daily frequenter of the Athenæum, which had elected him years before under Rule II. His other club, the Reform, he had given up before retirement.

By MacDonald's prevision, Buckle had been trained before Chenery's death in the executive duties of editorship. Hence, in 1884, at the age of 29, the newly-appointed Editor knew the routine well; moreover, he sympathized with its underlying intention. Coming straight from Oxford to Printing House Square, Buckle had lost no whit of respect for the claims of scholarship. This scrupulousness, present also in Buckle's predecessor, made a strong appeal to Walter and served the Editor well in his task of presenting news and views with fairness and accuracy. In addition, Buckle had actually taken the Editor's place since the beginning of the year owing to Chenery's illness and had then shown himself well able to assume full responsibility; he felt nevertheless that the Chief Proprietor might properly wish to appoint an older and more experienced man, but John Walter, so far from seeing any difficulty, regarded the editorial succession as so settled an affair that his method of informing the new Editor of his appointment was merely to ask him to name his assistant. For this post, Walter had thought of appointing, as he said, one of the older leader-writers (several possessed more than ten years' standing) the better to balance the new Editor's youth. Buckle expressed doubts whether such an arrangement would be satisfactory and pointed out that there was no need to take an immediate decision, since a provisional arrangement he had made with a man, like himself aged 29, to act as Assistant Editor was working well. The partnership which thus began lasted, in fact, throughout the whole period of Buckle's editorship of twenty-eight years.

John Brainerd Capper had been on *The Times* staff two years longer than Buckle. His father, an English artist of only moderate means and of a delicate constitution, had migrated to Edinburgh partly for reasons of health but mainly with a view to the education of his large family, and J. B. Capper passed through the





### GEORGE EARLE BUCKLE Editor of *The Times* 1884

#### OTHER EDITORIAL APPOINTMENTS

Edinburgh High School and University with distinction, graduating with first-class honours in Classics in 1877. Armed with strong recommendations from Charles Cooper, Editor of the Scotsman, for whom he had written reviews and leading articles, he came to London in 1878, and applied for work on The Times. He sometimes humorously suggested that his Edinburgh education, coupled with the fairness of his skin and hair, led MacDonald, the manager, most clannish of Scots, to think him a brother Scot. At any rate, he obtained without difficulty an appointment on the Gallery staff, where he reported some of Beaconsfield's speeches in the House of Lords, and then, early in 1880, was brought into the office, into the subeditors' room, of which he shortly became chief. There he was on the threshold of the Editor's room, and his adaptability and capacity were so apparent that he was often called in to help, when either Chenery, Clifford, or Buckle was away, and on Clifford's final departure he was established as second Assistant Editor. Accordingly, during 1883, he had acted in the Editor's absence as Buckle's lieutenant in bringing out the paper and the strong feeling of mutual regard and trust that sprang up between the two men proved to be life-long.

John Walter had only slight personal knowledge of Capper in February, 1884, but he soon became well satisfied with the arrangement, and showed his satisfaction in a marked way. Delane's house in Serjeants' Inn had been acquired by *The Times* with the view of using it as a residence for the Editor, and Chenery had lived there for a short time before his death. But Buckle, who had recently purchased a house in Bloomsbury, was reluctant to move, and Walter thereupon, in the course of 1884, offered No. 16, Serjeants' Inn to Capper, who lived there for several years. The third place in the Editor's room was filled at first by A. A. Brodribb, an experienced journalist and excellent scholar, who was transferred after some years to the headship of the Parliamentary staff, and later by three notable men in succession, W. F. Monypenny, Bruce L. Richmond, and G. S. Freeman.

The team worked in unison and with marked success. They freed the paper from the omissions, duplications, and other technical faults which had been so conspicuous in Chenery's time. There was a notable revival of the paper's prestige. Matthew Arnold, a close observer and an able critic of the daily Press, remarked in October, 1884, concerning the leading articles, that "The Times . . . has much improved again." The younger, more elastic, and livelier control thus having had its effect, John

<sup>1</sup> Arnold to C. E. Norton, October 8, 1884. (Works XV, p. 195.)

Walter acted with complete loyalty and trust towards the new Editor. He was still glad to find time, as in Delane's period, to visit the office after attending the sittings of the House of Commons or other evening functions, and to look at the proofs. As of old, if he objected to anything, he frankly said so. Buckle and Capper may have found some of these visits inconvenient, but they never adopted, even internally, the position of Delane and Dasent towards the Chief Proprietor. That jealous attitude towards the "Griff" had vanished under Chenery, and it remained the purpose of Walter to prevent its revival.

The relative detachment Walter had imposed upon himself since the tragedy of Bear Wood Lake on Christmas Eve, 1870. did not imply the slightest relaxation of control of the office and of the paper. He not only enjoyed the power of appointment to all posts, but took great care to exercise it. Delane had been appointed Editor in 1841 by John Walter II, and Walter III had scarcely any alternative in 1847 but to confirm him in that position. But in 1877 the erudite Chenery was his own nomination; and, as such, more spontaneously responsive to his personal authority. In 1884, by appointing in Chenery's place a young scholar of his own choice, Walter impressed the entire staff with his personal authority. Thus the Chief Proprietor became from the first more magisterial towards the youthful Buckle than he had been towards his elderly predecessor and much more so than towards Delane. On the managerial side, a similar tendency had earlier showed itself. Walter's authority in that department had long been exercised with increasing directness. In Buckle's day MacDonald as Manager was a deputy; he carried out Walter's policy and was responsible to him for the staff, the building in which they worked, and the economic value of their labour. In conversation soon after the appointment of the new Editor, Walter emphasized to him that the editorial and managerial sides of The Times were entirely separate, and hence that the Editor's conduct of the paper should on no account be affected by domestic financial considerations. These, he said, were entirely reserved to the Manager.

At the time of Chenery's death, MacDonald, then 61 years of age, had been in the service of the paper for almost forty years. However candid in the expression of his views upon the organization, MacDonald made no jealous distinction between the Chief Proprietor and the paper; he was supremely content to watch over the interests of John Walter, his employer, which were also the interests of *The Times*. The confidence which the Chief Proprietor placed in him was so complete, and so completely

reciprocated and so well known, too, in the office that the Manager's wishes possessed incontestable and increasing authority. With the growth in the Chief Proprietor's authority over the Manager there came an increase in MacDonald's power over both sides of the organization, i.e., the printing business which was Walter's personal property, and the paper owned by the proprietors, whose number was increasing on account of the subdivision of the original sixteen shares. By reason of MacDonald's technical capacity, the Manager's office had grown steadily in importance since his appointment as successor to Morris. As an experienced reporter he was competent to handle the literary staff at home and abroad, and as an engineer he had taken a leading part in designing the first of all rotary presses and was expert in the task of producing a paper that was growing in bulk. He was never tempted to underrate competition. Hence, despite his relative lack of independence, the range of his power, as Walter's executive, was much wider than that of Morris who never had jurisdiction over the printing business. Although he had disinterested himself in editorial work his influence was strongly felt in that department. Furthermore, as the older man, MacDonald's personality and authority necessarily overshadowed Buckle's.

In these years, the Manager's power was, in any event, bound to increase. Whenever the trade situation, whether on competitive or other grounds, becomes a source of anxiety to a newspaper, regarded as a business, the maintenance of its position depends less upon editorial than managerial direction and foresight. Morris's conception of management was ruled by the comfortable early Victorian standards, whereas the mid-Victorian period corresponding with MacDonald's term witnessed the dramatic but permanent increase in competition, both in London and in the provinces, that completely altered the relative positions of the journals. Previous Chapters of this History have shown how The Times was affected by the competition of the penny popular Press, for example the Daily Telegraph; and later still by competition from the penny "classical" papers such as the Standard and the Morning Post; and how it felt the effect of the twopenny "cultivated" papers in the evening. The next Chapter will describe the effect, in Buckle's period, of the combined pressure upon The Times of these three groups. It may now be noted that changes in the Manager's functions were required if The Times was to deal with competition adequately. Hence, while it was not intended that MacDonald should be completely detached from the political and journalistic side of the paper, his time became so completely filled with administrative duties

that his responsibilities became increasingly more onerous. In consequence, MacDonald's life may yet be described as narrow compared with his predecessors'. Both William Delane and Mowbray Morris went much about town, both wrote occasionally for the paper, both travelled. MacDonald, after the Crimea, did none of these things; it was his plainer task to concentrate upon the duty of fitting Printing House Square to fight in a battle for circulation that yearly grew more and more intense. But although MacDonald, unlike his predecessors, did not write, he exercised indirect power over those who did, and that was all that was necessary to him as Manager. The old theory underlying the managerial and editorial relationships had, in fact, been changing before Delane's death, and Walter's announcement to the new Editor that the editorial and managerial sides of the House were distinct was significant.

The new Editor, therefore, was not in exactly the same position as his predecessors. Barnes had a direct interest in the prosperity of the paper, for he held a share in it; Delane, as his father's son, had been brought up in the knowledge of managerial responsibility, and he had a regular bonus on profitable years. Barnes and Delane, therefore, habitually watched the paper's material progress. When Walter appointed Chenery, he too was granted a percentage of the profit. At no time, however, does he appear to have been tempted to investigate the causes of the decline in his period; there is, indeed, no evidence that, with his outside interests in scholarship, he ever found the time to acquaint himself with it. This detachment was something new; Chenery's predecessors had always regarded themselves, to some extent, as responsible partners with the Chief Proprietor in a great and risky enterprise. Their period, however, was that in which the England that The Times understood, and interpreted, took immense pride in commercial enterprise. It was an attitude that was changing. To Chenery's successor commercial enterprise was no longer new and his generation was less interested in it.

When Chenery's successor was appointed, Walter at first continued the practice of paying him a bonus which corresponded with the fortunes of the paper. Buckle, informed too, that he had no responsibility for the commercial success of the paper, naturally regarded it as confirmation that the honourable policy hitherto followed, as far as he knew from the foundation of the paper, was to be continued, *i.e.*, The Times had two sources of revenue: (i) from the sales of its copies and (ii) from advertisements; and that the maintenance of these items of revenue in

sufficient volume to pay salaries and dividends was a burden from which the editorial mind was to be completely free. Whether the paper made a profit became of concern to him only in so far as his supplementary receipts were concerned. Buckle as a clerical and academic product was even more inclined than most of his generation to take British commercial enterprise for granted, to enjoy little pride in it and to take no interest in industry and finance. Finally, when the decrease in revenue and in circulation accelerated, and Walter commuted the salary of the Editor. Buckle, with a comfortable fixed income, lost his sole contact with the material fortunes of the paper. Hence, during the whole of his editorship. Buckle never realized that although the circulation and revenue of the paper were not the responsibility of the Editor, as such, a period of acute competition rendered it very desirable for him to possess some knowledge of the trends of both. As it was, Buckle, having completely disinterested himself in the economic position of The Times during the long period of decline in circulation and revenue, himself unconsciously assisted the process, by which power became centralized in the hands of the Manager, and in consequence, became all the more tenacious of his sovereignty over the essentials of the editorial task that remained to him. He was satisfied to keep firm hold of the political and literary pages of the paper under the authority of the Chief Proprietor.

John Walter in Delane's time, while disclaiming responsibility for the particular political opinions of The Times, habitually admitted responsibility for the paper's line and tone. He had more than one further reason for laying upon himself the duty, from time to time, of reminding Delane, Dasent, or any of the editorial staff, in whom lingered memories of Barnes's selfsufficiency, that he was master. No such necessity arose in the case of his own choice, Chenery; and it was even less likely to arise in the case of Buckle. From the beginning of his career, Walter was, for him, a Chief Proprietor to be served. If the young Delane had found the second Walter ruthless and terrifying. the young Buckle was inspired with awe by the Olympian aloofness of the third. Later the awe changed to affection and Buckle ever felt proud to be a servant of the Walter family. It remains doubtful if anyone, certainly none of a younger generation, who first met Walter after the tragedy of Bear Wood, could hope to enter the secret places of his mind. His sons Arthur and Godfrey were no exception; nor was Buckle. The third Walter, even if he inspired affection, remained the same autocrat that Walter the second had been after Barnes's death.

Side by side with changes in the functional relations of the Proprietor, the Manager and the Editor, and changes in the economic situation of the paper, there went developments in the journalistic profession, none of which was a help to *The Times* as it was left by Delane and Chenery. The daily Press was now ubiquitous and no Government could avoid dealing with it in a straightforward, business-like fashion. MacDonald and Walter were agreed that the personal Editorship practised by Delane had been rendered impossible for his successors by Gladstone's legal restrictions which prevented Civil Servants cooperating with journalists, by the expansion of the cheap Press and by its increasing party significance, and, finally, by the improvement and multiplication of the news agencies.

Hence while the changes in the political world worked to reduce the possibility for the Editor himself, through his own personal and confidential channels, to secure exclusive information, the increasing size of the paper detained him in the office -hard at work dealing with the manuscript as it came to hand, deciding upon relative claims to space and arranging for appropriate inclusion. Buckle was not to be without his personal triumphs, but they were to be fewer than Chenery's and far fewer than Delane's. Buckle could hardly hope to master, as easily as Barnes and Delane, the whole of the material that went into his enlarged paper; and, what might be as important, to acquaint himself with the material that was rejected. Moreover, the same competition that forced the paper to become more inclusive and therefore bigger made it necessary for the newspaper trains to leave earlier. This reduced the time available for dining out. Thus Buckle was prevented by every sort of consideration from becoming a second Delane. The new Editor dealt with a paper, on the average, over twice the size of that Delane had inherited. The Times that Barnes at first got out was four pages, with one issue of eight pages once a week; a few years later the rule was eight, with frequent issues of 12 pages and a maximum of 16. The Times that Buckle took over from Chenery was seldom less than 16 pages; it was often 18 and sometimes the 24 which became the desired normal towards the end of his editorial career.

Buckle inherited from Chenery a staff of editorial writers comparable with that which Chenery inherited from Delane; indeed, they were mostly the same men—Mozley, Wilson, Stebbing, Shand, Reynolds, Carter, and Thursfield. James Macdonell had died in 1879, and Wace and Courtney had resigned in 1880, the one on becoming Principal of King's College, the



JOHN CAMERON MACDONALD

MANAGER OF THE TIMES, 1873-1889

From a photograph

#### THE EDITORIAL STAFF

other on accepting office as an Under-Secretary in Gladstone's second Government. But the vacancies had been well filled. In the whole history of *The Times* few leader-writers have wielded a more forceful and pungent pen than J. Callander Ross, who had learnt his profession in Glasgow, and whose scientific bent of mind and knowledge of scientific progress were especially valuable. Strength on the side of art, literature, and scholarship was added by T. Humphry Ward, whose accomplished wife, afterwards famous as a novelist, also wrote occasional articles. Then James Macdonell's younger brother, John Macdonell—though never actually a member of the permanent staff, for the Bar was his profession and he held legal office—became increasingly useful as a writer on legal and philosophical subjects.

Buckle considered it his duty to read carefully all the material that had been selected for use in the paper by the home staff of several sub-editors, in the place of Delane's one or two. The foreign staff led a separate existence, organized and managed by MacDonald. At its head in 1884 was Edward Cant-Wall. His previous career as Special Commissioner for the Standard, and as War Correspondent in Egypt for The Times, had been highly distinguished. On the Continent, Blowitz was still in Paris making daily diagnosis for the British public, not merely of the varying political currents of the Third French Republic but of the whole European situation. In the near East, Donald Mackenzie Wallace, after a short spell in St. Petersburg, was at Constantinople studying and interpreting on the spot the ramifications of Ottoman politics and destined for a high position in P.H.S.1 In Egypt, the paper had Charles Frederic Moberly Bell destined, a quarter of a century later, to play a leading role in the transfer of The Times from the control of the fourth Walter to Lord Northcliffe.2

The corps of law reporters for *The Times*, all barristers, was under the leadership of a remarkable character, W. F. Finlason, who, keen lawyer as he was, was never blind to what was human and dramatic in a law case. There was a magnificent Gallery staff, who provided night after night during the Parliamentary Session a full report of the debates, seldom running to less than two pages, often to three or four, of the paper. They were all men of good education, several of whom rose afterwards to high positions, not only in journalism but in the law and in the State. Their chief was still, and had been for years, Charles Ross, in his old age an imposing figure with a shaggy head of snow-white

<sup>1</sup> For the character and career of D. M. Wallace, see below, Chapter VI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For the character of C. F. Moberly Bell, see below, Chapter V.

hair. Capper, who had served under him, described him at a *Times* dinner long afterwards. He said that "under a severe formality of manner he had a rich fund of humour, much real kindness of nature, and the playfulness of a kitten."

Into the City office new strength had recently been brought by securing the services of Robert Giffen, formerly of the Board of Trade, whose reputation as a political economist and an authority on trade and commerce was high. Moreover, about this period. on Giffen's recommendation, a young Cambridge man was taken into the office, Wynnard Hooper, who was afterwards to direct the department for many years with distinction. Buckle spared only general oversight to the foreign and City departments and spent the greater part of his time upon the remainder of the ever-growing paper. In the main, the enlargement was designed to give greater scope to the "special" article contributed by a "special" correspondent, which competition made desirable. Delane, except in his last years, made very limited use of such correspondence, although towards the end of his career he had in Brackenbury the makings of "Our Military Correspondent" who was succeeded, in turn, by Knollys, Lonsdale Hale and Charles à Court Repington. The "special" article appeared more frequently under Chenery. Buckle's policy was to appoint still more correspondents expert upon such subjects as education (the Rev. H. Roe), Scotland (Scott Dalgleish), Africa (J. S. Keltie), and Adolphe Smith as the industrial correspondent. The most significant of these innovations was the political correspondent. Instead of incorporating party news in the leading articles, as in the classical manner, Buckle initiated a new feature, at first considered of temporary value, headed, for example, "The Political Crisis." This first appeared during the ministerial crisis of 1885. It began in long primer with a statement of events in London that tailed off into minion with descriptions of the state of opinion throughout Great Britain<sup>1</sup>. Henceforth political news was usually so given. Buckle's own great "scoop," the exclusive news of the resignation of Lord Randolph Churchill, appeared on December 23, 1886, in the exceptional position of a separate paragraph, with a particular, instead of a general, heading: "Resignation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer."

The nineties were not far advanced when Walter's alternative to MacDonald's suggestion of separating the executive from the

<sup>1</sup> The London section was the work of Algernon Bourke, younger son of that Earl of Mayo who had been Viceroy of India and had been assassinated in the Andaman Islands in 1872. Bourke never wrote a leading article, but his valuable information, derived from a large acquaintance in society and with political leaders, was also regularly used in special paragraphs. (Cf. Appendix, p. 772.)

#### ADDITIONAL "SPECIAL" CORRESPONDENTS

political responsibilities of editorship became manifest. The new plan represented a compromise: MacDonald was instructed to appoint a Director of the Foreign Department, a Colonial Correspondent and a Lobby Correspondent. All these exercised functions that Delane would himself have discharged in collaboration with the writers. In his period, it will be recollected, certain leader-writers—for example Reeve and Lowe—were highly placed in either office or society and sometimes in both. Their function was to secure as well as to expound the news and to value tendencies, but it was not required of them that they should attend the office. Under Buckle it became the rule for leader-writers to come to the office or at least to live within an easy distance. It was of the essence of the plan that the director of the Foreign Department and the new Colonial Correspondent should attend the office and be responsible to Buckle.

The traditional style of the leading articles, like the staff of writers themselves, was maintained by the new Editor. Even before Buckle arrived at Oxford as an undergraduate, the section of the public that remained loyal to The Times after the cheap Press was established had made its influence felt. "Thundering out" was no longer to their taste. It was a practice, indeed, which had begun to go out of favour in the middle of the century with the departure of Reeve and Dasent, and as Delane grew older it was relinquished. Despite the contrast in tone, the independence of the paper was preserved under Buckle as absolutely as it had ever been under Barnes and Delane. If The Times supported a party it was because it believed its policy accorded with the nation's best interests. The duty of the journal remained what it had always been: to obtain authentic information of political, social and economic affairs and to comment upon them without regard to private ambitions or interests. The competence of the paper to discharge this duty derived from its continued possession of literary and mechanical staffs which surpassed in quality and in capacity those of any other journal. The Daily Telegraph might claim the "largest circulation in the world" but The Times was by far the largest paper, its daily issues being twice or thrice the size of any of the cheap newspapers. At three times the price of the penny Press, The Times, it was thought at Printing House Square, could rely upon the continued existence in the eighties of the same public which during the fifties preferred to read it for the same reason as it preferred to taste Twining's teas and Fortnum and Mason's The Times, despite the increasing competition that lessened its sales, would continue to be "the best possible newspaper" which, John Walter III believed, the educated Englishman would continue to demand.

The Times celebrated its hundredth birthday within a vear from Buckle's appointment to the editorial chair. Consciousness of the antiquity of the paper had already begun to mark a change in the attitude of the staff towards it. After the passing of its first centenary The Times, regarded by the second Walter and by Barnes as a commercial enterprise designed to render a service to the public at a profit to its owners and conductors, came to be looked upon by the third Walter and by Buckle as an institution. The minds of the editorial staff during the Victorian period were governed by standards that had acquired by sheer continuity a character that partook of the nature of spirituality. Furthermore, it was impossible for Buckle to separate the collective personality of the staff from the aggregate of its work. overruled, as it was, by a deep sense of loyalty to himself. as Editor. Thus the Editor and his writers were alike actuated by an inspiration that derived from the close intimacy which the staff experienced by their daily contact with one another.

Furthermore, the impress left on the paper by those from whom he had inherited the editorial task was deep. The methods of his immediate predecessors were seen by Buckle as having coalesced into a body of practice obligatory upon him as Editor. Buckle's subordinates shared his vision of the paper. The editorial staff did not work as a number of individual responsible journalists loval to private and personal convictions; it was their habit, in the countless decisions that had to be taken day by day and night after night, to ask themselves: not "What do I individually think should be done or should be said?" but "What should The Times do; what should The Times say?" The feeling which animated the editorial body was comparable. therefore, with that which inspires colleges, schools and other, even secular, organizations. It was, in a sense, as a collegiate institution that Buckle and his staff understood The Times. rather than as a publishing company; and never as a commercial speculation.

There is here a notable and distinct divergence from the practice of his predecessor of half a century earlier; for, whereas Buckle inherited, made up his mind to confirm, and, more, did his best to transmit his ideal of *The Times*, Barnes occupied a wholly different position. For him, consciousness that some sort of institutional status had been conferred, whether by politicians or by the public or by the process of time, upon his paper did not

exist. The Times was a privately owned political instrument and newspaper, conducted for private profit, and expressing his private judgment. There was nothing spiritual about it; it was a militant dialectical journal. The staff was not a corporate or collegiate body. In his day there was no editorial body with a collective point of view. The whole staff, like the entire paper, was small enough to be controllable by one man. Hence Barnes's writers existed to write to the Editor's orders; it was, therefore, no affectation which led him to assure Le Marchant that he had never been "impressed with the idea of that enormous power of The Times to which you refer." For Barnes as a born controversialist "the power," enormous or not, lay in the inherent force of his argument; for him as an egoist it was a mere happy accident that his arguments were pressed home in a paper that was read throughout the country and reached every class. It was immaterial to him what people said about The Times as long as they read it; and reading The Times first became a national habit in Barnes's time. Barnes's readers can hardly be said to have taken The Times because they liked the paper; and still less because they felt it their duty to take it. But for the Editor of two generations later reading the paper was more than a habit; it was a habit that had been handed down. The audience for which the paper was produced had gradually defined itself and had begun even in Delane's time to exercise an influence upon the conductors of the paper it chose to read. It was out of the question in Buckle's day for the paper to be called, as it had been in Barnes's day, the "bloody old Times."

Another earlier practice now abandoned was the frequent and unexpected change of front. Delane was a skilled practitioner of this art, which in Buckle's view had become more out of date every day. It was well suited, he thought, to an age, when, after the settlement of the Free Trade question, parties were no longer divided by vital issues, the Peelites were wandering in the wilderness with very uncertain affiliations, and both great parties, Whig and Tory, were anxious to render no more than lip-service to a renewal of Parliamentary Reform. It has been seen that in Delane's last ten years, when the acute rivalry of Gladstone and Disraeli dominated the scene, and when the increasing influence of the Radicals in the Liberal Party was fostering political change, Delane himself observed a certain consistency of moderate Liberal progressiveness. The Times was in general agreement with public opinion both in supporting Gladstone over the important measures that distinguished his first Ministry of 1868-1874 and, when that Ministry had spent its force, in welcoming Disraeli to power, with a programme of social reform at home and a more Imperial outlook abroad. This was, in effect, what is known on the Continent as a Left Centre policy. The history of the next few years gradually resulted in placing The Times on the Right Centre rather than on the Left Centre. This then was the general line followed by Buckle in his first period. For the formulation of that policy, Buckle's guide was his own personal assessment of the principles and views held by the Proprietor and by the constituency of readers with which the Proprietor and the paper had by his time come to identify themselves. This assessment, which Buckle made day by day and which found expression in the leading articles, was the one strictly personal element in the editorial task. As Delane conceived it, the paper was resolutely impersonal just as the staff was absolutely anonymous. It was for this conception that the staff fought at the end of Buckle's term when, in the circumstances described in the ensuing pages, The Times came under new control. But neither Chenery nor Buckle was quite so stiff as their predecessor.

John Walter III, who was Delane's contemporary but survived him for fifteen years, remained a pillar of strength for The Times. He was himself its living embodiment. He could remember Barnes; he was a boy of sixteen at Eton in that critical year of 1834 which brought out all Barnes's powers, and he had taken his degree at Oxford and had been introduced into the office before Barnes's death. He had then been associated for some years with his father, John Walter II, in the management of the paper on behalf of the proprietors, and since his father's death in 1847 had been sole manager. His determination in 1884 was not different from what it had been as a young man. The passage of nearly two score years had deepened his sense of trusteeship. The Times would never, so long as he was alive, depart from the old ways. Nor was it necessary for him to intervene directly. The staff were in full sympathy with his desire to maintain the old standards. Walter was happy to be ruled by the customs of the office and he was happy that the Editor should accept the same rule. Thus, after thirty-seven years' service the Chief Proprietor relied confidently, and not in vain, on the influence that work in the atmosphere of Printing House Square exercised over his own mind and over all the servants of the paper. It was upon this atmosphere that Buckle relied for his inspiration during a period of nearly thirty years of journalistic activity which embraced the most profound of issues, foreign and domestic.

#### II

# EMPIRE AND IMPERIALISM: GORDON

achievements aptly as they were symbolized by the Jubilee celebrations, which were close at hand when Buckle became Editor, could not fail to move *The Times*. Collectively and individually the staff responded to the pervading sense of mission and the paper became one of the principal agencies by which the nation was taught to "think Imperially." Expansion was implicit in Barnes's campaign against Daniel O'Connell and the course taken by the Eastern question during the next generation quickened the paper's interest, above all in Egypt, where *The Times* had long maintained a special agency.

The development of the British Empire was linked in the mind of John Walter and Buckle with the Irish question. The policy was to maintain the Empire as it stood and to demand scope for expansion when it was thought to be necessary either by strategic desirability or natural growth. But notwithstanding its desire for expansion, *The Times* was well disposed towards the schemes of other Powers which did not endanger the development of the British Empire. The paper's attitude is well shown in the leading articles dealing with German reactions. It supported the German occupation of Angra Pequeña. In spite of the unfriendly tone of the German Press, which inveighed against the "insatiable egotism" of England, *The Times* again and again welcomed Germany as a colleague with Great Britain in the colonial sphere. "The truth is," declared *The Times* on January 12, 1885,

that there is room enough in the world for the colonial enterprise of both England and Germany; and the colonial expansion of the latter can only impair the friendly relations of the two Powers if either of them fails to respect the just rights and legitimate interests of the other. . . . We desire only to do as we would be done by, to recognize the rights of others and to claim equal recognition for our

#### EMPIRE AND IMPERIALISM: GORDON

own rights. England, which has so many colonies, cannot complain if Germany desires to have colonies too.

Exceptions were made. One was

Zanzibar for instance, where English influence has long been paramount, and if it were found that the eye of Germany were fixed on such a point as this, it would be very dangerous to reckon on the complacent acquiescence of England in German interference with it. (January 12, 1885.)

The other instance, in which *The Times* took an even greater interest, was Egypt where the paper was determined to see that "English influence" remained "paramount."

After the Khedive Ismail's career of reckless borrowing in the European market came in 1876 to its inevitable end, France the chief bondholder, with very reluctant English support. secured the institution of an International Commission of the Public Debt. As Ismail only made a show of accepting the Franco-English recommendations, the situation was an uneasy one. In 1879 the two countries had recourse to the Sultan, who deposed Ismail in favour of his son, Tewfik, under whom the administration remained in the hands of incompetent Turkish Pashas, while a French and an English Controller-General were appointed, with general powers of investigation but no administrative functions. The natural consequence was a further weakening of the Khedivial authority. The mutineer Arabi's rise to power was not averted. On June 11, 1882, riots broke out in Alexandria and some 50 Europeans were brutally murdered. Thousands of Christians left the country, commerce came to a standstill, and the whole fabric of society appeared to be collapsing before Gladstone, Prime Minister since April, 1880. agreed to let Sir Beauchamp Seymour bombard the forts of Alexandria. The French Navy took no part since de Freycinet. who had succeeded Gambetta as the French Premier, was unwilling to involve France in commitments outside Europe. Italy declined to cooperate and the Sultan merely procrastinated. Hence Gladstone at the head of a Liberal Government was driven to undertake alone the task of restoring order. Wolseley's defeat of Arabi at Tel-el-Kebir resulted in the exile of the agitator and the restoration of the authority of Tewfik, who could not, however, rule Egypt without foreign aid. As he could not hope for active support from Turkey he was forced to accept whatever protection he could obtain from Britain.

At the beginning of 1883 Lord Dufferin, British Ambassador in Constantinople, who had Donald Mackenzie Wallace<sup>1</sup> with

<sup>1</sup> For Wallace's earlier career, see Vol. I, pp. 464, 524-6, 601.

#### RISE OF THE MAHDI

him, drew up a scheme of reforms acceptable to both Sultan and Khedive and defined British policy towards Egypt. France, having forfeited her partnership in the Dual Control, was relieved to learn that Britain was resolved neither directly nor indirectly to administer Egypt permanently. But Dufferin made it clear that Egypt could not be left to govern herself until she was capable of it, and until it was certain that toleration would not be given to any subversive influence that could upset the existing relations between Egypt and Britain. To put Dufferin's recommendations into effect, Gladstone sent out the best man he could find for the task of organizing the army, Sir Evelyn Wood. and gave him full support. General Valentine Baker assumed responsibility for the gendarmerie; Edgar Vincent (later Lord D'Abernon) took charge of financial affairs. Little progress was made in the main political task, i.e., teaching Egypt sound government. The British were at the disadvantage of having to initiate a long-term policy while insisting that their control was only a temporary one. The problem was more complex than had been thought. In July, 1883, an epidemic of cholera revealed the inadequacy of the native administration. In September Sir Evelyn Baring was sent out to succeed Sir Edward Malet as British Agent and Consul-General. At the end of October Baring reported that British troops could safely be withdrawn from Cairo and the other garrisons in Egypt reduced. Gladstone, accordingly, made this announcement at the Lord Mayor's Banquet. Thus was set the stage upon which a drama was soon to be enacted that shocked and thrilled the world.

At the time of Arabi's mutiny against the Khedive, Mohammed Ahmed, a native of the province of Dongola, proclaimed himself the promised messiah of Islam. As Mahdi, he secured the support of a number of the Sudanese. The British Government having been led unwillingly into Egypt declined responsibility for the territory to the south, most of which was leased out to slave-traders by the Khartoum Government. In view of the Mahdi's agitation the Pashas in Cairo were advised from London to withdraw from the Sudan. Instead they employed General Hicks, a retired English officer, to lead an Egyptian army against the Mahdi. Charles Moberly Bell, *The Times* correspondent in Cairo and one of the best-known members of the European community, arranged with one of Hicks's staff officers, Colonel Farquhar, for a series of letters on the campaign.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> General Gordon had spent two strenuous years there from 1877-1879, fighting the slave-trade and crushing rebellions, but he resigned from the Governorship of the Equatorial Provinces when Ismail was deposed and the Sudan once more came under an Egyptian Pasha.

Meanwhile a certain young Irishman, Frank le Poer Power. Meanwhile a certain young Irishman, Frank le Poer Power, arrived in Khartoum on August 1, 1883. Power, who was the son of a bank manager in Dublin, had been educated at Clongowes. Although only 25 at this time, he was not inexperienced for he had held a commission in the Austro-Hungarian army and had been besieged in Plevna. His first commission as a war correspondent was on the Bulgarian frontier in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877. He returned home soon afterwards and joined the staff of Saunders's in Dublin. In 1883 Power agreed to go out to Khartoum with Edmond O'Donovan, the Daily News correspondent, with the idea of helping him to write a book on the Sudan. Power and O'Donovan were welcomed by Hicks and set out with his army, but Power almost immediately developed dysentery in a severe form and was sent back to Khartoum, where he was nursed by Colonel de Coëtlogon, the only Englishman left in the town. He enlivened his convalescence by studying Arabic and offered his services as a correspondent to *The Times*. Therefore, when the news reached Khartoum in November that Hicks and his army had been annihilated near El Obeid, The Times was the only British newspaper to receive first-hand reports. Power cabled that Kordofan was now virtually lost and that Coëtlogon expected the revolt would soon spread to Khartoum. Inevitably the nationality of the defeated leader increased the dismay in Cairo and aroused horror in England. The news in London followed swiftly upon Gladstone's announcement at Guildhall of a forthcoming reduction of British forces in Egypt. The leading article in *The Times* of November 23, 1883, made it clear that the journal considered the time inopportune:

The policy, in which the evacuation of Cairo, recently announced but, happily, not yet accomplished, is a step, has been adopted in defiance of the advice of every person of authority and experience in Egyptian affairs from Lord Dufferin downwards. It is time to put an end to this perverse pursuit of a doctrinaire's will-o'-the-wisp. The responsibilities of our position in Egypt are now fully understood by the country, and Ministers cannot afford to make any mistake about them.

That Britain was in no way concerned with the Mahdi's victory over a force led by a British officer was admittedly difficult to believe at home. In Egypt it was considered impossible. Moberly Bell had been engaged in commerce in Cairo since 1865; his dominant personality and lively interest in political affairs had brought him into touch with most of the officials, British, French, Egyptian or Turkish; his promptitude and reliability had earned



FRANK LE POER POWER

### DEFEAT OF GENERAL HICKS

for him the high respect of MacDonald. Bell expressed strong doubts as to the workability of the "system of government by marionettes," but he recognized that the best method of strengthening the government, i.e., by the proclamation of a British protectorate, was not one that would be acceptable to public opinion in England or on the Continent. The correspondent therefore advocated the maintenance of a strong British army of occupation "to avoid the necessity of annexation." The best course would be for the British Government to make a statement of its intention to occupy Egypt for a certain term. This would give the country stability without which law, order and commerce would never recover. Bell's critical attitude towards the Government notwithstanding, he was given the friendship and confidence of the Agent-General, Baring. A strongly worded dispatch on the Hicks disaster made Bell's position clear:

The first responsibility, therefore, rests solely on the Egyptian Government, but, unfortunately, the results cannot end there. However emphatically the British Cabinet may repudiate its responsibility; however justly it may urge that no English officers were employed in the expedition, it is hardly possible to suppose that such reasoning will influence the sentiment of the Egyptian fellaheen, who are not habitual students of Hansard or the Army List. To them the Soudan is a province depending on the Government of Egypt, which is itself dependent on the English. (November 24, 1883.)

Two days later the paper announced with approval that, in accordance with the advice of Sir Evelyn Baring, the withdrawal of British troops from the Khedive's Capital had been suspended.

In that week there had been further bad news. The Times of November 20, 1883, confirmed that Egyptian troops moving near Suakin had been heavily defeated, the British Consul, Captain Moncrieff, being among the killed. In the territory south of Berber, only Khartoum and a few isolated posts were outside the Mahdi's rule. Power, who had declined an offer by The Times to release him from his engagements, cabled from Khartoum on November 25 a message that gave the world the first authentic news of the critically dangerous situation of the town: "We have not food for more than a month, and only 2,000 men to defend nearly four miles of lines. It is perfectly useless to attempt to hold this place, where the population is a slumbering volcano." (November 27, 1883.)

Bell, who was in close touch with Baring, General Stephenson (commanding the British army of occupation) and Evelyn Wood,

knew that Egypt had not the resources left to undertake a successful campaign in the Sudan. He telegraphed from Alexandria:

It is a totally mistaken idea to suppose that the question between him [the Mahdi] and Egypt is one of disputed territory, or one that can be settled by a surrender of the Soudan. His position is not that of an enemy to Egypt, but of a pretender to the universal allegiance of Islam. His military successes are producing a growing belief here in those pretentions, not confined to the least educated classes. (November 26, 1883.)

Placing the southern limit of Egypt proper at Assouan, Bell considered that three alternative courses remained for the consideration of the British Government:

First, the abandonment of all but Egypt proper, the establishment of a defensible frontier, and the maintenance of a special army for its defence, confining our interference with the slave trade to destroying the Egyptian markets for slaves. Second, to allow the establishment of a separate Turkish province, with a well-defined frontier. Third, the reconquest of the Soudan with Indian troops.

He added that the clear implication of the first two was the indefinite occupation of Egypt proper by a British force. In Printing House Square, however, it was not believed that Khartoum could already be written off or taken as good as lost. The leading article of November 30 called upon the Government for a declaration of policy and quoted Sir Samuel Baker's opinion that Khartoum could be held. The Times was convinced that British policy required that it should be held. The movements of the Mahdi were exciting interest in several European countries, and the French Press even was admitting that Britain could not now recede from her responsibility for Egypt. Bell, mindful of the necessity to restore Egypt's prosperity as well as to reform her government, maintained that to withdraw the British army of occupation would be equivalent to robbing a bankrupt country of its main chance of rehabilitation:

A simple guarantee that the army should remain ten years would do more to restore public confidence than any event since Tel-el-Kebir. . . . With such a guarantee credit would revive, and commerce recommence its operations, Alexandria would be rebuilt, and capital, being again invested, would increase the class whose interests are identical with the preservation of order. (December 14, 1883.)

The Times needed little persuasion to fight for the maintenance of British control in Egypt. The leading article of December 15,

## KHARTOUM'S FUTURE IN THE BALANCE

1883, pointed out that the country was unlikely to remain a political vacuum:

Egypt will not be left alone, and the choice before us is whether we shall keep that lead in the management of her affairs for which we fought, or whether we shall allow our own interests as well as those of Egypt to pass under the control of some other Power or combination of Powers. Unless Khartoum is defended, and authority maintained in Sennaar, the Soudan will either be filled with European adventurers or will relapse into native anarchy, constituting a standing menace to Egypt.

So much for the doctrine; the facts were less clearly set before readers. Apart from Power's short censored cables describing conditions in Khartoum, there was no authentic information available about the Mahdi, none about the rest of the Sudan. The Government made no statement; rumours only, and suppositions of all sorts, were passed from hand to hand. Baring himself had difficulty in getting reliable news of the Sudan. On December 14, 1883, he asked Power to act as British Consul at Khartoum and thenceforward the correspondent, to his great pleasure, was asked to send him daily wires. Power's letter to his mother, dated December 26, 1883, is good reading:

You would be surprised how much influence being British Consul and *Times* Correspondent gives me here. The people here have a very high opinion of the power of *The Times*. They say "that it was not Europe, but *The Times* deposed Ismail Pacha" (and in this they are *au fond* right) and say "if this paper can change one Khedive, why not another?"

Power was boyishly delighted too, when the Khedive asked why he had to read *The Times* in order to get news three days before his own Governor-General in Khartoum (a Turk) could telegraph it to him. Meanwhile the opinion spread in Britain that "Chinese Gordon," whose previous experience in the Sudan had been so successful, was the one man who could deal with the situation in the Sudan. The suggestion seems first to have appeared in print in a long letter to *The Times* from Sir Samuel Baker. It was published on New Year's Day, 1884, and explained why he considered it unnecessary to abandon the Sudan and made the suggestion that "A British High Commissioner, with full powers, should be dispatched to Dongola and Berber without delay, to inquire into the grievances of the people. Why should not General Gordon Pasha be invited to assist the Government?" The leading article that day made no

<sup>1</sup> See Letters from Khartoum by the late Frank Power (London, 1885), pp. 63-4.

comment on the suggested appointment of Gordon to the Sudan, but strongly supported Baker's plea for more effective British intervention in Egypt. The paper continued to regard the Mahdi as the leader of the discontented rather than the messiah of the Moslem tribes, and attributed his emergence to British destruction of the authority of the Egyptian Government and then leaving it to struggle on as best it might. On the same New Year's Day, 1884, The Times laid stress upon the necessity to make it known that "we have really taken Egypt in hand and mean to put up with no encroachment upon her real interests." The paper was often to return to the suggestion that we should "really take Egypt in hand" but was not yet prepared to define exactly the meaning of the term. Events now moved rapidly towards the appointment of Gordon.

The General had just returned from Palestine with a view to entering the service of the King of the Belgians, and he wrote on New Year's Day from Brussels to his friend Demetrius C. Boulger: "I go (D.V.) next month to the Congo, but keep it secret." Boulger decided¹ such news could not be kept secret, and four days later a leading article in *The Times* informed his countrymen of Gordon's new mission. Boulger himself wrote the article, but made little more of the subject than to deplore that the War Office had refused Gordon permission to serve under King Leopold, and would probably force him to resign his commission. There was no hint that the General ought rather to be sent to the Sudan.

Gordon arrived in England on January 7, 1884. He was interviewed at Southampton by W. T. Stead; and, ignorant of the Government's policy to evacuate Khartoum, gave it as his opinion that "You must either surrender absolutely to the Mahdi or defend Khartoum at all hazards." The interview was reproduced in The Times and in most of the Press. The Pall Mall Gazette conducted a fervent campaign in favour of sending Gordon to Khartoum, in which other journals joined, but the call of The Times was still for a declaration of policy regarding both Egypt and the Sudan. The Times, in fact, already knew that to send out Gordon as a miracle-worker could be no more than a stop-gap. The Egyptian Government's critical position was too plain. In the event of a decision not to send any British or Indian troops to assist the Egyptians, Baring recommended to Downing Street the evacuation of the Sudan. Evacuation might prove a work of great difficulty, he added. On January 4, 1884,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Boulger, D. C., Life of Gordon (London, 1897), p. 256.

## EGYPT TO ABANDON THE SUDAN

the Government decided that the Egyptian forces must be withdrawn to the frontiers of Egypt proper. This meant the abandonment of Khartoum to the Mahdi, and Baring was instructed to enforce this decision. Thus Her Majesty's Government made it plain that Britain was prepared only to assist in maintaining order in Egypt proper. Baring found the Khedive and his ministers most reluctant to take responsibility for the policy of withdrawal. One of those to whom he turned for advice and help was The Times correspondent in Cairo. Bell assured Baring that he could not only prevent Tewfik from resigning. but could persuade him to cooperate with the British. The correspondent's confidence was justified. Chérif Pasha's ministry resigned on January 7, 1884, but Tewfik remained in office, and Bell was 24 hours ahead of his rivals in informing The Times (January 8) that Nubar Pasha had been summoned to be Prime Minister. His telegrams during this crisis vividly describe his interviews while acting as intermediary between Baring and the Khedive. His success in predicting the development of events is partly explained by him in a private letter:

Just now I am rather scoring over my competitors. I was very much behind the scenes in all the recent events, and rather prevented the Khedive from making a fool of himself. As I knew beforehand that I could make him do it, I ventured to prophesy what he would do—and he did it, a little to the astonishment of Baring and a good deal to the astonishment of the ex-Ministers who thought they had got him under their thumb, and who now (according to The Standard) are very hurt at the readiness with which their resignations have been accepted.<sup>1</sup>

But if Baring had now obtained an Egyptian Cabinet which declared itself willing to evacuate the Sudan, he still had to work out ways and means. Gordon had gone back to Brussels and appeared to be lost to England. The Times gave prominent position on January 11, 1884, to an announcement that "The military authorities having refused permission to General Gordon to proceed to the Congo, he has been compelled, at great pecuniary sacrifice, to resign his commission in the English army. . . . He will leave for the Congo in about a fortnight's time." The same morning a letter from Sir Samuel Baker described the serious risks attending the evacuation of helpless civilians through hostile territory, and the leading article regretted that Gordon could not help with the problem. The day before Gordon crossed from Belgium to discuss his

<sup>1</sup> Bell, E. H. C. Moberly, The Life and Letters of C. F. Moberly Bell (London, 1927), p. 92.

resignation with the War Office, *The Times* in a leading article stated that his resignation had not yet been accepted, and hinted that the Government might yet call upon him to go to Egypt. The General arrived in London on January 15, and was met by Boulger, to whom he talked more about the Sudan than the Congo. Early the following morning Boulger saw Gordon at the Charing Cross Hotel, where for the greater part of three hours the General explained "for publication" his plans for civilizing the Congo, and as Boulger says¹ "The article, based on his information, appeared in *The Times* of January 17, 1884." Headed "General Gordon's Plans on the Congo," it began by stating that the General had left on the 16th for Belgium and intended to stay there until his departure for the Congo. But on the evening of January 18, 1884, Sir Thomas Sanderson, Granville's private secretary, wrote a note to Buckle, saying:

You will hear that General Gordon starts to-night for Egypt, accompanied by Col. Stewart, on a special mission. If you write anything on the subject, Lord Granville desires me to say that you may assume that General Gordon's Mission is to report on the military situation in the Sudan and to provide in the best manner for the safety of the European population of Khartoum and the Egyptian garrisons still in the country, and for the evacuation of the Sudan with the exception of the sea board.<sup>2</sup>

The next morning (January 19) the country was astonished to find the following statement in the newspapers,<sup>3</sup> published on the authority of the War Office:

General C. G. Gordon, C.B., started yesterday evening for Egypt en route for Suakin or Khartoum on a Special Mission. He takes with him as his military secretary Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart, 11th Hussars, who was at Khartoum on duty last year.

The leading article in *The Times* welcomed the fact that the Englishman best acquainted with the affairs of the Sudan was now on his way to Cairo; but the office had no illusions about the dangers of Gordon's mission, and the serious consequences that might arise from it. Readers were warned that:

It will certainly be as well not to feel too great confidence at the outset as to the final issue of the enterprise. The Government will

<sup>1</sup> Boulger, D. C., Life of Gordon (London, 1897), p. 258.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> T. H. Sanderson to Buckle, January 18, 1884. (P.R.O., G. and D., 29/153.)

<sup>3</sup> With the exception of the Daily Chronicle, which seems not to have received the official paragraph.

# "CHINESE GORDON" FOR THE SUDAN

undoubtedly be felt to have largely increased its responsibilities by entrusting him [Gordon] with his present hazardous mission.

The Times, however, had not even now accepted the inevitability of evacuating Khartoum with the rest of the Sudan. Bell's dispatch published on January 18, 1884, went so far as to ask if the Government had a policy ready in case Khartoum fell before the evacuation had been accomplished. Yet the leading article of the 21st expressed the opinion that England would be compelled, by the necessity of things, to hold Khartoum and maintain order there, and only evacuate south of it. To the surprise of Baring (who drew Bell's attention to it), the article overlooked the religious fanaticism of the Mahdi's followers, and placed its confidence in Gordon's powers of pacification.

When Gordon arrived at Port Said he was persuaded by Evelyn Wood, who met him there, to come to Cairo and discuss matters with the Khedive and Baring. At Gordon's suggestion, but with British approval, the Khedive appointed him Governor-General of the Sudan for the period necessary to complete the evacuation. Bell met Gordon at lunch in Wood's house on January 25. They talked, but as the correspondent noted in his private diary: "Wood introduced me as T[imes] C[orrespondent], saw him [Gordon] make a mouth. Carefully avoided anything but general conversation." But it is not easy to imagine Bell restricting his conversation to safe platitudes, and Gordon sent him a message by Wood that same evening inquiring if, when he (Bell) advocated holding the Sudan, he would say whether the English Government was disposed to find money to conquer it and meant to govern it. Bell notes in his diary that he never advocated such a course but it is possible that he expressed a purely personal approval of such a future policy.

Certainly there was no sign of such a turn in affairs. The Speech from the Throne at the fifth Session of Gladstone's Parliament, opened on February 5, 1884, blandly laid responsibility for the Sudan upon the Khedive's shoulders. On the same day, while Gordon was riding with almost superhuman swiftness across the desert between Korosko and Abu Hamad, the startling news was received that Osman Digna, the leading rebel chief in the Eastern Sudan, had won a victory over General Valentine Baker's troops who were trying to relieve Tokar, near Suakin. Baker's Egyptian soldiers, it appeared, had simply lain down to be butchered. A tremendous outcry in Britain followed. *The Times* recommended the sending of

troops from England or Bombay to guard the Red Sea littoral—the southern approach to the Suez Canal—and demanded prompt action from the Government.

The next day *The Times*, after deploring the inconsistency of British rule in Egypt, urged that English interference there really implied a Protectorate. Thereafter the paper steadily called for the proclamation of a formal British protectorate and the Paris Correspondent was quoted to show that the French would swallow their national pride and agree to Egypt's accepting our protectorate on account of the additional security it would give their financial and trading interests. Bell, also, now openly supported a British protectorate:

Our popularity and prestige are alike dissipated. Each day's delay in the declaration of a Protectorate increases the heritage of hatred storing up, which will soon render a Protectorate no longer sufficient, but necessitate annexation, with an iron rule. This opinion is not confined to one political party, but is expressed, without a dissentient voice, by every resident and visitor to Egypt—European, native, Radical, Liberal or Conservative. (February 11, 1884.)

But Gladstone held fast to the opinion that for England to declare a protectorate over Egypt would be a direct breach of faith to Europe and, moreover, to risk offending France. Neither withdrawal nor annexation being possible the Government tried to steer a middle course. The fall of Sinkat was confirmed on February 12, 1884, and the same day Salisbury's motion that the recent lamentable events in the Sudan were due in great measure to the vacillating and inconsistent policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government was carried by 100 votes. Northcote, in the Commons, condemned Gladstone's limited conception of our duties in Egypt but, after a protracted debate, the Government retained a majority of 49. A motion of censure was carried at a public meeting held in Guildhall on February 15 under the presidency of the Lord Mayor. The leading article that day pointed out once more that after Tel-el-Kebir all power and responsibility became vested in England's representatives in Egypt, yet so far all we had done was to proffer advice. It was not enough.

It will be time hereafter to settle the details of the policy which General Gordon has gone out to enforce, but the point of immediate and vital importance is to assure Europe and the Egyptians, and we may add all the peoples of Africa and the East, that we intend to be responsible for the government of Egypt and to admit no partners in that task. (February 15, 1884.)

#### GORDON RIDES INTO KHARTOUM

The words had an Imperial ring. The warning reference to the "partner" was a stroke at Gladstone's project, according to rumour, of seeking French cooperation in the Sudan.<sup>1</sup>

Gordon's approaching arrival in Khartoum lifted a load of gloom from the town. Power, inspired by Coëtlogon, had sent *The Times* a series of brief but pithy cables describing the rapid deterioration in morale as the Mahdi's forces approached. With the garrison unpaid and the inhabitants savagely ill-used by the Egyptian Pashas, it required an outstanding leader to rally the town. As Power wrote to his mother on February 9, 1884, he did not believe that

the fellows in Lucknow looked more anxiously for Colin Campbell than we look for Gordon. As regards relief of this place, when he comes he can only carry out the retreat. Sir E. Baring and Lord Granville seem to have the utmost confidence in me; it was solely on my confidential and I hope conscientious reports England has recognized the fact that the holding of Khartoum is bosh. I believe when Gordon comes he will sit upon me for this; but I have facts on my side.2 Power's cables continued to arrive promptly. Gordon rode in on February 18, 1884, and received a tremendous ovation. Power recorded his moving address to the people: "I come without soldiers, but with God on my side, to redress the evils of the Sudan. I will not fight with any weapons but justice. There shall be no more Bashi-Bazouks." Gordon's acts of reconciliation towards an ill-used people were greeted as wise and necessary, with the exception of his frank recognition of slave-holding, which came as a bombshell to the Anti-Slavery Society and to many other sincere philanthropists. How could Gordon, for so long the terror of the slave-hunters, thus betray his principles?3 The Times defended Gordon calmly and realistically while Gladstone was criticized for not squarely facing the question, and the Opposition for their "discreditable attempt" to forge a weapon of attack upon the Government out of the philanthropic sentiments of the

<sup>1</sup> Barrère, French Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, in a despatch to Jules Ferry, Minister for Foreign Affairs, dated February 9, 1884, refers to the rumours reported by the Paris Correspondent of *The Times* that France and England were again engaged in negotiations for a joint pacification of the Sudan. As may be imagined, the paper showed great hostility to the suggestion. Ferry wrote to Decrais, French Ambassador in Rome, on April 17, 1884, that he believed the Dual Control was dead but that he felt Italy would share his desire to prevent the English control of Egypt becoming absolute: "Elle ne peut pas se prêter plus que nous aux conceptions brutales dont le *Times* se fait l'organe: établissement d'une administration exclusivement anglaise en Egypte, de tribunaux à l'anglaise, suppression des Conseils de Santé et de quarantaine, proclamation d'un droit antérieur et supérieur de l'Angleterre sur les ports de la mer Rouge, &c." (Documents Diplomatiques Français, lère série, Vol. V, Nos. 200 and 239.)

<sup>2</sup> Power's Letters from Khartoum (London, 1885), p. 79.
3 It had been largely due to Gordon that the Slave Trade Convention, which forbade the sale of slaves from family to family after 1884 in Egypt and 1889 in the Sudan, was signed by Egypt and Great Britain in 1877.

country. Gordon was merely making the best of the inevitable. Confident in his grasp of the situation, he himself pronounced Khartoum to be "as safe as Kensington Park," and the very day after he arrived there Hartington declared that the Government was not responsible for the rescue or relief of the garrisons in the West, South, or East Sudan. The responsibility was still Egypt's. not Britain's. Thus soon was Gordon's mission repudiated.

The military situation, viewed as a whole, was certainly not improving. Tokar surrendered to Osman Digna, thus adding another crushing defeat "to the long train of misfortunes which have marred the policy of the Government owing to their persistent moral inertia and apparent incapacity to brace themselves to a resolution to strike in time." (The Times, February 23, 1884.) General Graham recaptured Tokar from the rebels in a few days, but Gladstone did not intend to embark on a punitive campaign. Having vindicated British prestige, Graham and his troops were then recalled to Suakin. The rebels, naturally enough, regarded this withdrawal as evidence of weakness, and the warlike tribes to the North and North-East of Khartoum hastened to join the all-conquering Mahdi. The indisputable consequence was that less than a month after arriving in Khartoum Gordon found himself besieged there. The Times considered Graham's withdrawal inexplicable: "To the innumerable blunders due to vacillation or perversity the Government has added one that savours of simple dementia." (The Times, March 3, 1884.) As late as March 6 Gladstone repeated the assurance that the Government did not intend to assume responsibility for Egyptian affairs in any more definite form, either permanently or temporarily. Granville, on the other hand, declared that it would be an act of treachery to Egypt. to Europe and to ourselves to withdraw our troops before there was a reasonable prospect of a stable government.

As far as Khartoum was concerned, there were now three Britons only: Gordon, Stewart and The Times correspondent1 they lived in the Governor's Palace, taking their meals together. Gordon considered Power "a nice young fellow" and Power wrote home glowingly about Gordon.<sup>2</sup> The General was only

1 Coëtlogon left Khartoum for Cairo on February 21, 1884, to make arrangements

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Coetlogon left Kharfoulm for Cairo on February 21, 1004, to make arrangements for the reception of the evacuees.

<sup>2</sup> In fact, Power, in the last letter received by his family dated March 6, 1884, said that he had made up his mind to accompany the General to the Congo when they were out of Khartoum "in about four months." Power's interest in and warm sympathy with the Sudanese won Gordon's approval. The correspondent wrote to his mother four days after Gordon's arrival: "He [Gordon] appears to like me, and already calls me Frank. He likes my going so much amonest the next types for not to do so is a mortal me Frank. He likes my going so much amongst the natives, for not to do so is a mortal sin in his eyes." (Frank Power, Letters from Khartoum, London, 1885, pp. 97 and 101.) Moreover, Power's military experience enabled Gordon to make use of him in various sorties and foraging expeditions.

## GORDON, STEWART AND POWER

too glad of the opportunity to refer Baring to Power's telegrams in The Times to supplement his own brief official dispatches. He also wrote to his sister on March 3, 1884: "You see everything in *The Times* that is of interest; Power, the correspondent. lives here; he, Stewart and I get on all right." It should be noted that Power's dispatches were sent with Gordon's full knowledge and approval, for a crisis arose through Gordon's use of Power to obtain publicity for his cherished idea of appointing Zebehr Pasha as his successor in Khartoum. Zebehr had been a mighty slave-hunter, notorious for his cruelties in the Sudan, but equally famous for his victories over rival leaders. He had been exiled to Cairo for suspected disloyalty to Ismail. but despite obvious drawbacks, he stood head and shoulders above everyone else in the Sudan as a leader. Gordon had asked for him in Cairo, when Baring, Nubar and Stewart insisted that Zebehr was not to be trusted. Gordon, however, still saw in Zebehr his only hope of setting up a rival to the Mahdi. Baring, who understood the difficulty of Gordon's task, eventually supported him in his request for Zebehr. The British Cabinet hesitated. Publicity in The Times was given to the matter by a telegram sent from Khartoum by Power on March 3:

It is now admitted that Zebehr Pasha is the only man connected with the Soudan who is endowed with the ability and firmness necessary to head any Government here. It is out of the question that General Gordon should leave Khartoum without first having formed a Government which would in some measure stem the wave of fearful anarchy that must eventually sweep over the Soudan. The arrival of Zebehr Pasha would draw over to his side the bands of rebels which are now scattered over the Soudan and his great knowledge of the tribes fits him more than any other man to take the place of the Egyptian Government. He would, of course, come here under certain stringent conditions. General Gordon has foreseen this ever since he left Cairo. (March 5, 1884.)

The leading article of the same day found this message "somewhat remarkable" and thought it preferable to maintain the town rather than to hand it over to a slaver.<sup>2</sup> But if the office entertained doubts about the wisdom of "setting the wolf to guard the sheep-fold," the majority of its readers had no doubt: the suggestion was infamous. A monster agitation arose, which

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Letters of General C. G. Gordon to his sister, M. A. Gordon (Macmillan, 1888), p. 380.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> As late as December 16, 1884, the Manager wrote to Bell: "We all here agree that Khartoum is the key of the Nile Valley and necessary besides for our security as a great Mahomedan town, for the satisfaction of our anti-slavery convictions and for our trade and civilizing aspirations in Central Africa. Still if you think otherwise my impression is that the Editor would not refuse you space in which to say so and he certainly would give your views the most careful and respectful consideration." (M. 20/691.)

was taken up in Parliament and Press. Gordon knew nothing of it, but hearing on March 7 that the Mahdi had sent emissaries to Shendi, half-way between Khartoum and Berber, he gave Power an official interview to be reported in The Times. 1 The correspondent's wire, saying that Gordon wanted troops sent down to keep communications open between Berber and Khartoum and that he wished to leave Zebehr in his place when he left the town, was published in The Times on March 10, 1884. But neither the Liberals (Gladstone thought he could have made the House accept it, if only he had not been absent through illness) nor the Opposition dared to sponsor Zebehr in face of the public outery and thus Gordon was denied Zebehr, and his military advice also was disregarded. The rebels established themselves near Halfiyeh on March 12. They cut the telegraph lines to Khartoum. From that date there was no communication south of Berber. The Times no longer received direct messages from Power.

It now began to appear difficult, even in Printing House Square and Whitehall, to evacuate Khartoum. Difficult it was. There were only 13 small paddle-steamers to bring the thousands of troops and civilians up the river, which must be used since the desert roads were now hostile. The leading article of March 24 approved the Government's refusal to make use of the exslave hunter, but recommended that a small relief force should be sent from Berber to Khartoum. The bad news it published on March 31 was now stiffening the paper's attitude. 'A long message from Power, dated March 16 and 17 (probably carried by messenger to Berber and telegraphed from there) revealed that Gordon had succeeded in rescuing the garrison of Halfiyeh, but had then suffered a severe reverse. His Egyptian troops, like Baker's, had allowed themselves to be cut to pieces by Arab cavalry, about 200 dying for four of the enemy. Power did not think Khartoum was in any immediate danger, but stated plainly that the Egyptian soldiers, with which the Government seemed to think Gordon could work miracles, were utterly useless. A leading article of March 31 took the bull by the horns. It insisted that the Government must try the moral effect of the announcement that, as soon as the climate permitted, British troops would be sent to Gordon's assistance. Whatever happened Gordon must not be deserted, for "The vitality of our Empire consists in the conviction, held by friends

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bell wrote to MacDonald from Alexandria on March 10, 1884:—"Gordon's changes of tone are somewhat bewildering. I telegraphed him the line I was taking about placing Graham's force at his disposal. His first reply was cautious—'Baring knows my views' but finding apparently that they did not seem to be listened to he, of his own accord, sent for Power and made him send the long telegram of Sunday..." (Bell's Egyptian letter-books under date.)

and foes alike, that in the last resort the words of England and of Englishmen will be backed by deeds." Next day *The Times* printed a message from Power, dated Khartoum, March 23, giving the ominous news that Gordon had failed to conciliate the Mahdi. The Prophet had sent back the robes of honour and spurned Gordon's offer of the sultanship of Kordofan. The policy of pacification having failed, there remained only the choice between warfare or surrender. Gordon had gone out to Khartoum on the understanding that no British troops would ever be sent to the Sudan, and until the defeat of his Egyptian soldiers he did not ask for them. But Power's message to *The Times* showed that Gordon now realized his helplessness:

We are daily expecting British troops. We cannot bring ourselves to believe that we are to be abandoned by the Government. Our existence depends on England. (April 1, 1884.)

The Times immediately called upon the Government for a plain statement that Gordon was to be supported:

If General Gordon be abandoned because he has not accomplished an impossible task, England will hold the Ministers of the Crown responsible for his life, and will exact the strict discharge of every fraction of that responsibility. (April 1, 1884.)

Power's S.O.S. from Khartoum naturally heightened the public desire for news. The Cabinet had no information of their own and could only refer questioners to Power's reports. Gladstone stated that Gordon was free to abandon his mission if he wished, but that the General's own dispatches said that he was in no danger.<sup>2</sup> The Cabinet maintained that the responsibility for Gordon's present position lay with the Egyptian Government. It was they who had laid executive duties upon him. There was no official evidence that he was in any danger; none that he expected troops to be sent. Against this *The Times* upheld on April 2, 1884, the claims of its correspondent to speak with Gordon's voice:

Our Correspondent is one of the three Englishmen in Khartoum, General Gordon and Colonel Stewart being the two others, and it is

<sup>1</sup> Gordon was still expecting Graham's troops to come down to Berber. He had not yet heard that Zebehr was refused and no troops were coming, for although he was able to send out plenty of messengers, it was extremely difficult to persuade men to penetrate the Mahdi's lines and enter the beleaguered city.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> But Baring telegraphed on March 24 that the question now was how to get Gordon and Stewart away. Only two solutions appeared possible. Either Gordon might be able to maintain his position till the autumn, or English troops might be sent to open up the way to Khartoum, an operation of great difficulty and risk, but still a possible one. Baring insisted that there was no time to be lost. (*Modern Egypt*, Vol. I, pp. 540-2.)

a matter of moral certainty that his telegrams, even when he does not distinctly allege General Gordon's authority for his statements, represent the opinion of all three.

Gladstone's eloquent speech expressing complete confidence in Gordon, while diplomatically refraining from committing the Government to any course of action whatsoever, contained also the observation that it was farcical to treat Power's messages to *The Times* as "virtually equivalent to an official declaration of policy conveying the mature conviction of General Gordon." The journal disliked the reference:

The Prime Minister appeared to think on Thursday night [April 3] that he had disposed of our Correspondent's statements when he described him as perfectly unchecked and unrestrained in the expression of his opinions, but the public will probably regard this as the highest testimony to the value of the information he transmits. (April 5, 1884.)

The leading article proceeded to comment on the mystery which seemed to shroud the whole affair. Gordon set out on the distinct understanding that the aid of British troops would neither be given nor desired. Power now said Gordon confidently expected such aid. The explanation seemed to lie in the fact that Gordon's circumstances had changed. On the way out, he was converted from a mere representative answerable to England, to Governor-General of the Sudan answerable to Egypt, but he was not given a free hand nor allowed the help of the one man he wanted. Simultaneously, the British Consul-General at Cairo was rendered anxious by the Egyptian Prime Minister's threat to resign, in order to rid himself of Clifford Lloyd, the energetic but tactless adviser to the Ministry of the Interior. Baring begged Moberly Bell to go to Nubar: "He is afraid of public opinion, you must work that." The Correspondent was driven to employ every art of diplomacy, and surprised himself at the success of his tactics. He noted in his private diary: "Whole interview was exciting because I felt I was mastering a man I thought far above me, but disappointing because it showed that my previous estimate of him had been wrong." Bell's own dispatches during this period are of rare interest, though, inevitably, not to be compared with Power's.

The Times of April 10 contained messages from Khartoum covering the period March 27 to April 1. Every possible pre-

<sup>1</sup> One of Power's surviving original messages bears Gordon's authorization of dispatch. See below, p. 104, note 1.

## GLADSTONE ON POWER'S DISPATCHES

caution was being taken by Gordon. The Mahdi's forces were gaining ground. Gordon's armed steamers were daily engaging the rebels below the junction of the two Niles, and he was shelling the village opposite the Palace. Power's message of April 1 read: "We have received no communication from the outer world since March 10. Last night the Arabs opened fire on the Palace, but we silenced them." The leading article pointed out that both Gordon and the rebels believed that Graham's forces were coming to open the road between Suakin and Berber. Dispatches continued to arrive from Power, generally a fortnight late. He spoke of the growing investment of Khartoum by the Arabs, and gave warning that Gordon's ammunition was running low. On April 7, the Correspondent reported with great bitterness that Gordon had received a message from Baring telling him that no British troops were coming to Berber—"in a word, clearly indicating that Gordon and the others who have been faithful to the Government are thrown over." (The Times, April 17, 1884.)<sup>1</sup> The Correspondent added that as the dispatch had been sent uncyphered to Berber (information which must have been given him by Gordon) the news that no help was coming would by now be widespread among the rebels. This was Gordon's first intimation that he was mistaken in thinking Graham's force was on its way to help him. He still did not know whether Zebehr was coming or not, but he now considered himself free to act on his own resources. The next day (April 8), Gordon sent a telegram to Sir Samuel Baker, suggesting an appeal for money in England and America, in order to buy military aid from Turkey. Strong emotions swept through Britain. Those who favoured the sending of a relief expedition based their case on Power's telegrams while those, from Gladstone downwards, who considered it unnecessary, quoted the text of Gordon's dispatches. It was overlooked that they emanated from a very brave soldier who was putting the best face on a desperate situation, and from a deeply religious man who deemed it blasphemy to despair. The leading article of April 19 gave in concise form the chief argument for taking Power's messages at their face value:

If our Correspondent enjoys the confidence and intimacy of General Gordon, as we are convinced that he does and as no candid person will doubt, then his statements are practically General Gordon's statements. If, on the other hand, he does not enjoy the confidence of the Governor-General of the Sudan and the absolute master of Khartoum then it is altogether preposterous to suppose that he would

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The publication of Gordon's reply to Baring in the Blue-book of May 1, 1884, confirmed Power's dispatch as accurately reflecting the General's attitude at the time.

be permitted, by General Gordon of all men, to thwart his policy or misrepresent the state of affairs by messages which are highly mischievous if untrue.

Gladstone, however, refused to read between the lines of Gordon's reports and, having been advised that a relief expedition was impossible for four months, owing to the heat of the Sudan, maintained that Khartoum was in no imminent danger. He firmly resisted the pressure of newspaper and public opinion. The Times used blunt language:

Khartoum is not relieved because the Government do not choose to relieve it, not because its relief is either impossible or particularly difficult. It is time to say, what military men know very well in their hearts, that the obstacles have been grossly exaggerated in official quarters simply to cover official reluctance to take action of an effective kind in any direction. (April 30, 1884.)

An Egyptian Blue-book published on May 1, 1884, showed how little the Government acknowledged any need for haste in assisting Gordon. On April 23, when Gordon was known to be cut off in Khartoum, Granville had requested E. H. Egerton<sup>1</sup> that Gordon be told to keep the Government informed "not only as to immediate, but as to any prospective danger at Khartoum" and to give details of the force necessary to secure "his removal." It was added that no force would be supplied for military expeditions, which were beyond the scope of the commission Gordon held, and that "if with this knowledge he continues at Khartoum, he should state to us the cause and intention with which he so continues." There was not the slightest recognition of the fact that Gordon, by staying as long as he had in the town, had incurred responsibilities towards the inhabitants not lightly to be repudiated by a man of honour. The Prime Minister had made up his mind that the situation did not require drastic action, and neither persuasion<sup>2</sup> nor opposition could make him budge. "It is high time to use plain words," said The Times.

A study of the papers contained in the Blue-book which we described yesterday confirms the most unfavourable views of the Ministerial policy, and must produce a general sense of shame and

<sup>1</sup> Deputy for Baring, who had come to London in connexion with the Cabinet's proposal to hold a conference of the European Powers to consider the question of modifying the Egyptian Liquidation Law. This dispatch did not reach Gordon for three months.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Baring had spoken in strong terms about Egypt and the Sudan to Gladstone, when he came to London in April, 1884, but the Prime Minister considered the matter "of secondary importance." (See Letters of Queen Victoria, 2nd series, Vol. III, p. 494.)

#### MINISTERIAL PREVARICATION

confusion. . . . The anxiety as to General Gordon's safety is not confined to London, or fomented by Opposition prints, as is sometimes suggested; it is discernible in the organs of all classes, those of the working men not excepted, and is plainly manifested in the North of England and Scotland, the strongholds of Liberalism. (May 3, 1884.)

Baring, then, had failed to win assistance for Gordon, and he. Nubar and Egerton next tried their best to convince Bell in Cairo that British public opinion was not with The Times in its support of the General and quoted various provincial newspapers. Bell answered that although the bulk of the people might be indifferent to the Sudan, they were keenly interested in Gordon and all he did. A motion of censure was rejected on May 13, by 303 votes to 275. The Times considered that Gladstone had suffered a moral defeat. It declared that "the emptiness and the irrelevance of his speech filled the most faithful of his followers with consternation." The journal reduced the whole question, i.e., of the relief of Gordon, of the financial difficulties in Egypt and of the proposed conference, to the simplest form: "Do they [the Government] mean to stay in Egypt until a stable Government is established on a permanent basis or do they not?" This was the fundamental question for The Times and one which the paper, for its part, confidently answered in the affirmative. The paper's policy towards Gordon and the Sudan sprang from its belief in the general desirability of the expansion of the British Empire. Its unswerving loyalty was necessarily given to Gordon, a representative of British Imperialism at its best and finest. But even if he had never gone to the Sudan, The Times would have supported the policy which made it clear to the rest of Europe that if any European Power ruled in Egypt, that Power must not only be England, but England alone.

Hence the office regarded Gladstone's invitation to the European Powers to attend a conference on Egyptian finance with suspicion. The invitation was accepted unconditionally, except by the French, who began to bargain. It became known that confidential negotiations were being conducted between England and France regarding the probable length of the British occupation of Egypt. Blowitz made frequent suggestions that France was trying to use the conference to establish some sort of international government in Egypt, a proposal which Bell attributed to the energetic Barrère. The Times issued daily warnings to the Government that no dilution of British responsibility in Egypt would be tolerated by the country:

<sup>1</sup> See ante, p. 29.

Our interests in Egypt differ not only in degree, but in kind, from the interests of other Powers in that country and from our own interests in other countries. On no other grounds can the Egyptian policy of the Government during the past two years be defended. If that policy is to be reversed, and if all the objects for the sake of which Alexandria was bombarded, Arabi driven into exile, and thousands of Egyptians and Arabs slaughtered in the campaigns of Lord Wolseley and Sir Gerald Graham are now to be surrendered, the decision ought not to be taken in the dark. If the negotiations with France are to eventuate in an agreement to re-establish any form of condominium in Egypt, the country will be justified in protesting by all the means in its power against an inexcusable abandonment of national interests. (May 21, 1884.)

Gladstone was able to inform Parliament on June 23, 1884, that some measure of agreement had been reached with France as to the length of the British occupation of Egypt, but it was contingent upon the adoption of the Government's financial proposals. The Conference sat for the first time on June 28, but collapsed at the beginning of August—news which *The Times* greeted with delight.

Meanwhile there had been no news from Khartoum since Power's dispatches in April. A number of conflicting messages came through the agency of the Mudir of Dongola, who remained loyal to Egypt, but no reliance could be placed on them. So Bell determined to make his own attempt to communicate with Gordon. He found an enterprising Greek and promised him £1,000 if he could bring back a message from Gordon, Stewart or Power before August 30 of that year. The Correspondent's original intention was to raise the money by private subscription but MacDonald decided that The Times would guarantee the whole sum. Bell wrote a long letter to Gordon summarizing the political developments since February in Cairo and London, and assuring the General that "public opinion, led by The Times, has been strongly urging upon the Government the necessity of sending a force to your relief." It seemed certain that a force would eventually be sent, but Bell shrewdly advised Gordon in his reply "not to express too sanguine a view as to your personal safety" as that would encourage Gladstone's Ministry to prevaricate. Egerton was allowed to send two messages in cypher and copies of his dispatches of April 24 and May 18. The messengers left Cairo at the beginning of June and no more was heard of them for many weeks. Late in June it became known for certain that Berber, the gateway to Khartoum, had fallen on May 26. There

## POWER'S LAST MESSAGES

followed rumours that Khartoum itself had fallen, that Gordon was dead or that he was a captive and had embraced Moham-The Times, like the Government, was preoccupied medanism. with the Egyptian Conference to the exclusion of the Sudan, but the leading articles continued to demand a relief expedition. While the Mahdi swept on, the silence from Khartoum remained Members of the Government felt uneasy. unbroken. July 15, 1884, Hartington, Minister for War, wrote to Granville that he could no longer be responsible for the military policy in Egypt.1 Hartington and Wolseley had kept in mind, ever since Gordon's appointment, that he might be trapped in Khartoum, but they had failed to interest Gladstone in the subject. Wolselev, nevertheless, undertook practical steps towards the preparation of a relief expedition and by July had a plan to lav before the Cabinet. Gladstone, who was engrossed in the Franchise Bill, temporized. When Hartington decided that his personal honour was involved and threatened to resign unless an expedition was sent, the Prime Minister acted. He knew that Hartington's resignation would bring down the Ministry. On August 5 he vielded, moving a vote of credit to enable operations to be undertaken for the relief of Gordon and announcing that Lord Northbrook would be sent to Egypt to make a special report to the Government. Wolseley, who was in command, arrived in Cairo on September 9. The Times regretted that the scope of the expedition was limited to rescuing Gordon and then retiring from the Sudan, a policy unlikely to provide a solution to the Egyptian problem: "There can neither be respect for British power nor permanent tranquillity in Egypt proper so long as the Nile Valley is left open to any pretender who may arise in the Sudan and Osman Digna is permitted to dominate the eastern districts up to the very walls of Suakin." (September 4, 1884.)

The battle for an expedition had been won in London, but there was still no authentic news from Khartoum. Hartington wrote to Gladstone on August 26, 1884: "It is almost inconceivable that Stewart and Power should abstain from sending messages if possible. A message from Power to *The Times* would be worth thousands of pounds." After a silence of over five months, *The Times* on September 29, 1884, at last published a dispatch from Khartoum. It was from Power and ran to a column and a half. There were two messages, one dated

<sup>1</sup> Bernard Holland, Life of 8th Duke of Devonshire (London, 1911), Vol. I, p. 466.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Op. cit., p. 489.

April 28, and sent via Kassala and Massowah to Suakin1 and thence by cable, and another dated July 30 and 31. The first message vividly described their daily engagements with the enemy and Gordon's counter-measures. The General, Power said, "is issuing rations to the poor. Food is very dear. We have corn and biscuits for about four months. . . . The health of the town is excellent, and we three Englishmen here are well and hopeful. . . . We have no news whatever of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government." The July dispatch showed that the town was still holding out but was threatened by starvation: "We have now been five months closely besieged and can at best hold out for two months longer. The soldiers and people live in hopes of English relief." Power described how Gordon had been compelled to issue fifty thousand pounds' worth of paper money to pay the troops, and to impose the strictest food rationing. He added extracts from his diary, showing the chief events of the siege from March to July, and continued on July 31:

For the last five months the siege has been very close, the Arab bullets from all sides being able to fall into the Palace. Since March 17 no day has passed without firing, yet our losses in all at the very outside are not 700 killed. . . . Since the despatch which arrived the day before vesterday<sup>2</sup> all hope of relief by our Government is at an end. so when our provisions, which we have at a stretch for two months, are eaten we must fall: nor is there any chance, with the soldiers we have, and the great crowd of women, children, &c., of our being able to cut our way through the Arabs. . . . General Gordon is quite well, and Colonel Stewart has quite recovered from his wound. I am quite well and happy."

The certainty that Gordon, if still alive, was even then stoutly resisting in Khartoum, with no hope of anything but martyrdom at the end, moved The Times to express its condemnation of Gladstone and his Government in the bitterest terms. In sum Gordon had been waging a desperate struggle for the protection of the garrison and the civilians whom he had been commissioned to save. Sent out by Gladstone to serve the political need of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> By an error Power's message of the 27th was printed under date April 28. It could not be sent, as he directed, via Berber. The original is endorsed in Gordon's autograph: "Send this. C. G. Gordon." It is difficult to decide whether or not the dispatch referred to by Power (his message dated July 31) as having arrived on July 29 was brought to Khartoum by Bell's Greek messenger, since Egerton dispatched various messengers with official documents. Mason Bey wrote to Bell from Massowa on September 26, 1884, forwarding Power's telegrams (see Appendix, p. 781) and asking for £1,000 "that you have promised" for one Sidi Osman el Morghanni to distribute among the messengers, two of whom had been killed. MacDonald and Bell refused to pay more than half the amount demanded as "this business has nothing whatever to do with your engagement as to the £1,000" (MacDonald to Bell, November 19, 1884) and also as the men were the bearers of Government dispatches at the same time.

<sup>2</sup> That drafted by Gladstone on April 23, 1884.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> That drafted by Gladstone on April 23, 1884.

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To Moberly Bell Carro

surround the tour yardon busily engaged with white in front force the act directions flaterday & leddy whelf cam down to bellage office to & fired on heavily on palace we relieved file with artillary and marketing had on to the creasing way soon retreated for was no loss on our rich, he town in quiet over half the Hopulation before the sige commenced went oger to whele Their louding out all that characters, guiden lisenes rations to the first food very char, we have corn & some bisenest for about four mouther, youlen has bround finger money as our Trange is still at thereby the murchants accept it as money. all the Farrary to relative can be their paid of freder hay but temminant of the come offer to all class of rebels their fredering if they abandon their musters of come in of this takes, it will be a fearful bloom to rich of the general has hind the large mission premises on the rich and has moved all the augustion there the large mission premises on the risks and has mirred all the humancher there in case of attack with artillery on the fortifications of hill be furgicity to a messenger from stayed Malitmest of the souther of Hasiala who is at which of Hills and chief amongst the musicimans in the souther came in tringing a letter the south says he has beaten the rebels resund Karrola the till friction to be of topod the art to be all his mene will come to his which the such respect to the man fell se held that the letels did not after to stop the beater of the letter like of hicks bandsmen game in last night from the belief the maid had sent two guns forty to res of should be to the thought with the remaining to the weed against take they will be the till the thought of the fielding and the against the best with the fielding the states the states the field the the fielding the states the states the states of the Hey at Sarfour has not enriendered to the Maide. The blue Mile is stone by the friends the hope that in the or fifteen days the stranger will be able the rebels hip I thigh the health of the town is excepted the three miglishmen here are well thospeful there are now arrayed the lines in addition to all other obstacles such as crows-feet, broken glass, wireentanglements of cheven & de frise three lines of land tochectors or percussion migres the care endomously powerful of an uncertainty from the intentions of the med to the grades whether was taken to the intentions of the mid for the film that a primary a past from parter was taken to the intentions of the mid kind

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#### THE LAST OF STEWART AND POWER

moment, Gordon's appointment, said The Times, had proved to be "one of the most callous and unjustifiable speculations in human life that a responsible Government ever embarked upon." (October 3, 1884.)

Meanwhile Gordon in Khartoum knew nothing of the Government's decision to send him help. After several successes at the end of July he planned to send Stewart and Power down the river, with 2,000 Egyptian troops, to recapture or destroy Berber. But a reverse early in September compelled him, as a last bid for outside help, to send them instead by boat to Dongola, to inform Major Kitchener of his desperate situation.1

Gordon planned their journey with meticulous care, arranged for their steamer, the Abbas, to be escorted past Berber, and impressed on Stewart the importance of always anchoring in mid-stream. The two men, accompanied by the French Consul, Herbin, set off confidently from Khartoum on the night of September 9, 1884. Gordon wrote in his diary on September 17, 1884, that: "If Stewart gets down, he ought to be in communication with Europe on September 22, and Power's telegrams ought to be in The Times, September 23. It makes me laugh to think of the flutter in the dovecot which will follow. That beastly Sudan again."2 On the morning of September 18 the Abbas grounded on a sharp rock and Stewart, instead of continuing the journey in the steamer's small boat, accepted the offer of a Sheikh to find camels for the party. Stewart, Herbin and Power, unarmed and unescorted, followed the Sheikh into a house where they were all treacherously done to death.3 Thus Gordon's desperate appeal for immediate help never reached Moreover, Stewart's papers (including Gordon's Kitchener. cypher key) were decoded and sent to the Mahdi, who thus learnt that Gordon was in much greater difficulty than he appeared to be from outside the town.

The Times held the Government responsible for the death of Stewart and Power. Weeks later it became known for certain that all the Europeans in the Abbas had perished. The Times of November 17, 1884, paid tribute to the memory of its late Khartoum Correspondent:

Unhappily, General Gordon has been obliged to dispel any doubts which may still have gathered around the sad story of the massacre

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Kitchener was carrying out intelligence and reconnaissance work in the Sudan to discover the best method of getting Gordon out of Khartoum.
<sup>2</sup> Journals of Major-General C. G. Gordon at Kartoum (London, 1885), p. 39.
<sup>3</sup> The Times simultaneously had the misfortune to lose the full services of Moberly Bell, who fell and injured his ankle on September 15. He underwent a series of painful operations but from his bed in hospital organized an emergency news service.

of Colonel Stewart, Mr. Power and M. Herbin. . . . We feel bound to pay a tribute to the memory of our brave and ill-fated Correspondent, Mr. Power, who, thrown on a sudden into the midst of great events and formidable dangers, showed himself fully equal to the occasion. It must not be forgotten that it was almost exclusively through Mr. Power's dispatches, published in these columns, that England and Europe, first of all, learnt the details of the disaster which befell Hicks Pasha's army, the triumphs of the Mahdi, and the gradual closing of the enemy around Khartoum. Afterwards it was from him we had the graphic and stirring accounts of General Gordon's arrival, of his energetic efforts to establish order and to keep the hostile tribes around him at bay, of his victories and his misfortunes, of the valour of his Bedouin foes and the treachery and cowardice of his Turkish and Egyptian troops. Then, for a long time the curtain fell. It was lifted, for a moment, when Mr. Power was enabled to send us his journal of the events, as romantic as any recorded in history, which had been happening while Khartoum was cut off for months from the outer world. But, once more, and unfortunately for the last time, the veil descended upon the heroic comrades of General Gordon.

Gordon's own tribute appeared in his diary for November 9, 1884: "Stewart was a brave, just, upright gentleman. Can one say more? Power was a chivalrous, brave, honest gentleman. Can one say more?" In the history of journalism, Power's telegrams, above all his last dispatches, created a political situation comparable in kind only with those of Russell from the Crimea. Power's death was one of the severest blows suffered by the staff of *The Times* during Buckle's editorship. Gordon was now alone, knowing only that the relief expedition was hurrying on as fast as it could. Unexpected difficulties due to the condition of the Nile delayed its progress and a fall in the level of the river laid Khartoum open on one side to the Arabs. On January 26, 1885, two days before the first steamers came in sight, Khartoum fell and Gordon himself was slain.

The Times was the newspaper least likely to ignore the lesson. Barnes had shown that he had in him the making of an Imperialist. Delane disliked the term but embraced the idea. The Irish policy of The Times was closely linked to it throughout the period from O'Connell to Parnell. The foreign and imperial policy of the paper was in the hands of editorial men fitted by temperament and experience to appreciate the significance of Britain in the rapidly expanding world of the second half of the nineteenth century. It was a policy that was handsomely backed by John Walter. Two years after Buckle's appointment The Times came to grips with Parnell.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Journals of Major-General C. G. Gordon at Kartoum (London, 1885), p. 310.

# III

# PARNELLISM AND CRIME

N a day in April, 1886—the same month in which Gladstone introduced his first Home Rule Bill—a young Irish journalist named Edward Caulfield Houston presented himself at Printing House Square. He had written the account of the trial of the Phoenix Park murderers which had appeared in *The Times* three years before, but he was not known to the Editor even by name, because that work had been done only as deputy for Dr. Patton, of the Dublin Daily Express, then The Times Correspondent in Dublin. Since the trial he had been appointed secretary of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, a body of whose formation to fight Home Rule in Ireland The Times had emphasized its approval, and he impressed Buckle favourably as a young man of high intelligence and force of character. Subsequently, before any arrangement had been made with him, the Editor received testimony to his competence and honesty from three men held in high regard at the time both in politics and in society, Captain Edward Ponsonby, R.N., then Private Secretary to Speaker Peel and afterwards eighth Earl of Bessborough, Sir Rowland Blennerhassett, a Liberal Irish landlord, for many years M.P., who had married a German Countess and had a wide knowledge both of Ireland and of Continental politics, and Lord Stalbridge, who as Lord Richard Grosvenor had been Chief Whip in Gladstone's 1880 Administration.

The object of Houston's visit was to appeal for the help of *The Times* in an enterprise that he had undertaken on his own responsibility and in which he was now approaching frustration through lack of funds. The evidence he heard in Court during the trial of the Invincibles had convinced him that there was Parnellite complicity in the background—a conviction that was confirmed by the flight of League officials after the informer Carey's revelations. He had accordingly been engaged for some time in inquiries designed to prove the close association of Parnell and other Irish Parliamentary leaders with the outrages and murders in Ireland, particularly the Phoenix Park crimes, and he now represented that he was in a position to purchase compromising documents which would enable *The Times* publicly to denounce Parnell. The person in possession of these papers was in danger of his life should

his dealings with Houston become known to the Irish terrorists. and his identity could not therefore be disclosed. Houston asked that The Times should supply the money to enable him to complete the purchase of the letters, which should then be used in the paper to support an exposure of the Nationalist leaders.

The story told by Houston was entirely consistent with suspicions that had long been entertained in Printing House Square, and the evidence he proposed to procure would, if genuine, be of the utmost assistance in the campaign against the Home Rulers on which the paper had embarked. But to buy letters whose contents were known only by hearsay from a person whose identity was undisclosed and whose bona fides might be questionable was a course of action too speculative to be justified. Buckle accordingly told Houston that he must decline his proposal for the time being. but that if at any time he should be able to produce the actual letters to which he referred The Times would be open to further negotiations. Houston called again in June to say that he was still pursuing his investigations, but had not yet got possession of the letters. Buckle therefore once more declined to intervene.

But at the end of September Houston appeared for the third time, and now he placed before the Editor the actual documents to which he had been referring. The letters were ten in number, five purporting to be signed by Charles Stewart Parnell and five by Patrick Egan; to these a sixth letter from Egan was added at a later stage of the negotiations. The cumulative effect of the correspondence was to show that Land League funds had been lavishly used in furtherance of the murder campaign, and that Parnell had given direct personal encouragement to the perpetrators of the outrages. The most damning of all the letters (known as "No. 2") read as follows:

[Page 1] Dear Sir.

15/5/82

I am not surprised at your friend's anger but he and you should know that to denounce the murders was the only course open to us. To do that promptly was plainly the only course our best policy.

But you can tell him, and all others concerned that though I regret the accident of Lord F Cavendish's death I cannot refuse to admit that Burke got no more than his deserts.

You are at liberty to show him this, and others whom you can trust also, but let not my address be known. He can write to House of Commons.2

[Page 4]

Yours very truly

Chas. S Parnell

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For the texts see Appendix, p. 773. <sup>2</sup> Sic; there is no "the" before "House of Commons." The letter has been repeatedly misquoted in this particular. The point is a minute one, but Parnell made the phraseology an issue.

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## HOUSTON PRODUCES THE "PARNELL" LETTERS

Houston laid these letters before Buckle as telling their own tale. He was not in a position to add anything material by way of explanation or commentary. All he could say was that he personally believed them to be genuine. But he could offer no proof, nor could he publicly associate himself with them in any way. Those were the conditions on which he had obtained them, from a source that he frankly admitted to be tainted—as, indeed, was only to be expected from the nature of the letters. He proposed that The Times, accepting these conditions, should take over the letters and investigate their authenticity in any way that might be possible without his help or intervention. If, at the end, The Times remained unsatisfied, Houston should receive back the letters, but if their genuineness were considered proved he asked The Times, in return for the free use of the documents, to refund the amount he had expended in procuring them. This sum, he stated in a subsequent interview with MacDonald, the Manager, to be £1,780. He asked for no remuneration for his own services, nor payment as a contributor to the paper, having undertaken the inquiry, he said, from purely patriotic and disinterested motives.

The great public importance of the letters, provided they were authentic, was now apparent to Buckle, and it was manifest that their publication in *The Times* would be a political event of the utmost gravity and a momentous contribution to the cause that the paper had at heart. But the immediate transaction with Houston presented itself as a purely commercial matter of purchase, which by the usual practice of the paper lay outside the Editor's domain. Buckle accordingly asked Houston to lay his proposals before the Manager.

MacDonald was no less deeply impressed by the character of the letters than Buckle had been, and both for their intrinsic importance and because of the large sum involved he at once consulted the Proprietor. Walter, who was no longer in Parliament, in which he had sat for many years as a Moderate Liberal, was concerned with the genuineness of the documents and with their worth. He took the solicitor of The Times, Joseph Soames, into consultation. None of the three negotiators on behalf of The Times survives to-day. The impression preserved by Houston is to the effect that, throughout their transactions with him, Walter and Soames kept the whole business, necessarily secret as it was, entirely in their own hands, and that MacDonald. like Buckle, knew little or nothing of what passed. That is certainly an exaggerated view. Though much of the management of the investigation in detail was handed over to Soames, especially as regards the legal aspect of the matter, MacDonald

## PARNELLISM AND CRIME

appears to have been steadily associated with all Walter's proceedings, and kept Buckle in general touch with what was done.

Walter's assumption of leadership was entirely in harmony with the development of the constitution of the paper in the days of the old régime, as explained in the previous Chapter. Though in ordinary circumstances the Editor controlled the literary content of *The Times*, and though the functions reserved to themselves by the earlier Walters had devolved in the main upon the Manager, the Principal Proprietor was ultimately responsible for everything that appeared in the paper and for the actions of all his subordinates. In the ordinary working of the paper he had been content to efface himself, but on occasions of great moment it was both his right and his duty to take the first place. This was such an occasion, both for its gravity in national politics and for the weight of the political and financial burden The Times was about to assume. Accordingly Walter chose to bear the full responsibility himself. It must be put on record, however, that in all he did he had the wholehearted concurrence of MacDonald and Buckle, neither of whom saw reason at any time to dissent from the conclusions he formed or the actions he based upon them.

Neither Walter nor any of his colleagues was familiar with Parnell's handwriting, and there was unexpected trouble and delay in obtaining undoubted specimens for comparison with the alleged signatures. It was a marked characteristic of Parnell that he wrote letters seldom and with great reluctance. Soames applied on Walter's behalf to the Speaker for leave to inspect the Test Roll of the House of Commons (which is signed by newly elected members), but without success. Failing that source of information, the following advertisement was inserted in the "Agony" column of December 21, 1886:

AUTOGRAPHS WANTED.—TEN POUNDS will be given by the advertiser for a COLLECTION of not less than TWENTY AUTOGRAPHS of distinguished PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS, including those of Mr. Gladstone, Lord Hartington, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Bright, Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Salisbury, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Sexton, and Sir M. Hicks-Beach. Must be supplied within the next fortnight. Address J.C.M., care of Messrs. Sampson Low and Co., 188, Fleet Street, E.C. Should more than one collection be sent in, the advertiser will be free to select that which he thinks the best.

This advertisement had the desired effect, and though the supply of Parnell signatures was still far from copious, three undoubted

#### THE EVIDENCE OF THE AUTOGRAPHS

specimens were obtained within a week, and others gradually came in afterwards. After a careful comparison of these with the signatures to Houston's letters, Walter and his advisers were themselves fully satisfied of the authenticity of the latter but sought the opinion of Inglis, the most eminent handwriting expert of the day whom the Treasury consulted in its prosecutions. He, too, was satisfied that the signatures were indeed what they seemed. Certain other features of the letters contributed to strengthen this conviction. The letter quoted (see page 44), known at the time as "No. 2," was exactly of the nature that might have been expected, on The Times view of Parnell's character, in the circumstances in which he was placed in May, 1882. That view was that he could do no less than denounce the Phoenix Park murders in the House of Commons, but he had also to pacify the murderous organization that he had enraged by his denunciation of their crime. Indeed, he had at about this date applied to the Home Secretary for police protection, and there was no other apparent ground on which he could have incurred the wrath of the extremists among his countrymen. The very form of the letter, which seemed to present itself to The Times, as later it did to many others, as an answer to an angry and perhaps threatening remonstrance, was highly natural in itself, but unlikely to have occurred to a forger.

Examination of the letter in detail yielded other points of verisimilitude. It was written on a sheet of folded notepaper of good quality with a peculiar water mark later identified as having been supplied only to the Dublin Land League and the manufacture had long ceased. The whole of the text came on the first page, and the words "Yours very truly Chas. S Parnell" on the last. These latter words alone were apparently in Parnell's writing; the body of the letter on the first page was presumed to have been written by a secretary. All this seemed very unlike the work of a forger, but was natural enough from the assumed point of view of Parnell, who might at some future date wish to disown the letter, and could do so provided the page containing the signature were torn off.

Another small point was observed in the body of the letter. Where the words "our best policy" stand, the writer had originally begun to write "the only course"; this had subsequently been erased and the weaker expression substituted. Such an alteration seemed again inexplicable on the hypothesis of forgery, though perfectly natural in a writer carefully choosing words to extricate himself from an embarrassing situation.

Thus the internal evidence of the letters seemed to furnish abundant reason to consider them genuine. External evidence there was none, and from the nature of the case none was to be expected. In the state of Ireland at that time information bearing on the crimes of the terrorists was obtained and transmitted at the gravest risk of life, and there was nothing either unusual or unreasonable in Houston's insistence that the anonymity of his informants must be preserved. Accordingly Walter, with the concurrence of Soames and MacDonald, agreed to accept the letters (ten in number) as genuine, and purchased them for *The Times* at Houston's previously mentioned price of £1,780.

This point was reached in the middle of January, 1887. The original idea was to publish the letters at once. Arrangements were made for the reproduction in facsimile of letter No. 2 in the issue of January 27, the day of the opening of Parliament. It was hoped that the publication would go far to secure the passage during the Session of an effective Crimes Bill, which was, in the opinion of *The Times*, imperative in the disturbed state of Ireland, then terrorized by the National League. At the last moment the plan had to be changed. On the 26th, not many hours before the paper containing the facsimile was to go to press, a consultation was held by MacDonald and Soames with Sir Henry James (afterwards Lord James of Hereford), whom The Times was wont to consult on important points of law, to discuss the manner of their treatment in any legal proceedings that might be expected to follow their publication. It then transpired, entirely to the surprise of The Times representatives, that Sir Henry had seen the letters before. They had been brought to him by Houston in the summer or early autumn of 1886, and he had then advised that they were not adequate in law to sustain the case it was proposed to put forward. Further, Sir Henry expressed doubts of the authenticity of the letters, begged the representatives of The Times to be most careful, and discouraged publication. At this interview of January 26, 1887, the name of a certain Pigott was mentioned for the first time as that of a person who, Sir Henry James understood, had been in some way concerned with the procuring of the letters. The name was unknown to the representatives of The Times, nor was it regarded as of sufficient importance to require the consultation of those members of the staff of the paper who were specially conversant with Irish affairs.

The unexpected disclosure of Sir Henry James's prior knowledge of the letters, and his unfavourable judgment on them, caused something like consternation. Buckle was informed and immediately summoned Houston to Printing House Square to explain

## WALTER BUYS THE LETTERS

what looked like a piece of double-dealing. Houston's explanation was simple. He was, although this had nothing to do with his activities in connexion with the letters, secretary of a Unionist political society. As secretary of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union he had had frequent dealings with Lord Hartington, whom, as the leader of the Liberals who had broken with Gladstone over Home Rule, he regarded as a political mentor. On first obtaining possession of the letters, since he had already been mildly rebuffed by The Times, he consulted Lord Hartington as to whether some other use of them might be made more effectively than through the Press. Hartington advised him to consult James, who had been Attorney-General while the Liberals were in office, and was the chief legal adviser of the Liberal Unionist Party. James in turn had recommended placing the letters in the hands of Scotland Yard, but Houston, who was not satisfied that the police were whole-hearted in the prosecution of Irish crime, decided to lose no more time but carry out his former intention of offering the letters to The Times. He had, however, been given to understand that his conversations with Hartington and James were to be regarded as confidential, and felt bound not to mention to Buckle that they had taken place. If The Times considered that it had been misled, he was willing to take back the letters and cancel the whole transaction.

The Times, of course, had no intention of going so far as this, for there was still confidence in the authenticity of the letters in spite of James's advice. But his adverse opinion of their legal value was none the less disconcerting, and the publication of the facsimile was, for the time being, suspended. The legal problem was not, of course, the most important. The case The Times proposed to make out against Parnell was more political than legal. If it could be publicly demonstrated that the letters were genuine the weight of the blow struck at the Home Rule Party would be tremendous, whether the wording of the documents was or was not in strict law sufficient to sustain a charge of conspiracy or of being accessory to murder; nor could Parnell, as a matter of policy, take action against The Times on any other basis than the complete disproof that he had ever signed the letters at all. This, Walter was convinced, he could not do. But as a matter of ordinary precaution, if The Times was to launch so grave a charge without the resource in reserve of a technically impregnable legal case, the letters must be reinforced by further political argument rather than be left to create their own effect on internal evidence alone.

Accordingly, it was decided to undertake a comprehensive survey of the whole course of the murder conspiracy in Ireland,

#### PARNELLISM AND CRIME

bringing out the evidence tending to show that it had been encouraged and even aided by the Parliamentary party and the Land League, and leading up to the ultimate production of the letters as the culminating point of the campaign. Under the title of "Parnellism and Crime," this survey began in *The Times* of March 7, 1887.

A leading article introduced the series, and the note of solemn indictment was struck from the very start. After reflections on the "flabby sentimentalism" of the day, the leader proceeds:

From that moral hebetude Mr. Parnell and his allies have reaped immense advantages; in fact, they owe to it their very existence. In times not yet remote they would assuredly have been impeached for one tithe of their avowed defiance of the law, and in ages yet more robustly conscious of the difference between evil and good their heads would have decorated the City gates. Treason has often gone unpunished when its success was so rapid and complete as to give the traitors control of the Executive, but it has been reserved for this age to permit open, avowed, and defiant attacks upon the State to be carried on with impunity by a contemptible minority of a minority.

The article proceeds to quote various utterances of Nationalist leaders and their new Liberal allies, on the strength of which it formulates a definite charge:

There are volumes of evidence, and it is being added to every day, to show that the whole organization of the Land League, and its successor the National League, depends upon a system of intimidation carried out by the most brutal means and resting ultimately upon the sanction of murder. The Irish Home Rule party glory in being the inventors of this organization, and openly base their appeals, whether of the wheedling or of the menacing kind, upon the knowledge that its power is at their disposal.

The following paragraph is clearly inspired by the language employed in the as yet unpublished letter No. 2, and the veiled allusion was perhaps intended to wring the withers of Parnell himself:

At certain moments it is desirable not to run the risk—though it is one which Mr. Parnell almost contemptuously disregards—of rousing the apathetic people of this country. The League, like other organizations, has to moderate the indiscreet zeal of its subordinates. At the present moment, for example, it is not good policy to alarm the diminished party that still adheres to Mr. Gladstone. They want very much to believe that Mr. Parnell is the head of a constitutional agitation, that he is quite fit to be the head of a nation, and that he has no desire whatever for separation. These tasks must be made as easy for them

## OPENING OF THE ATTACK ON PARNELL

as possible, hence murder is verbally discouraged, and Mr. Parnell judiciously drops the inspiriting language he is accustomed to address to his brother conspirators when dollars are required.

The leader ends with an accusation of the Liberal Party:

Mr. Gladstone and his party are deliberately allying themselves with the paid agents of an organization whose ultimate aim is plunder and whose ultimate sanction is murder, to paralyze the House of Commons and to hand Ireland over to social and financial ruin. (March 7, 1887.)

The articles serving as the pièces justificatives for this indictment were, according to the usual practice of the paper, unsigned, and The Times took full responsibility for them. But it has long been an open secret that they were written by J. Woulfe Flanagan, the son of a distinguished Irish Judge, the Rt. Hon. Stephen Flanagan, and himself a Balliol man, contemporary of Asquith and Milner, who had taken, like them, a first class in Greats. A Catholic but a strong Unionist, he possessed an intimate and detailed knowledge of the contemporary history of his country. He had not been consulted during the negotiations with Houston, which, as it afterwards turned out, was a great misfortune for the paper, for his acquaintance with Dublin life and journalism, which had its shady as well as its attractive side, would have enabled him to warn his seniors of the pitfall that lay before them. Flanagan's name will recur as this history proceeds, for he was destined to spend a long life with distinction in the service of The Times, and these three articles, headed "Parnellism and Crime," were his first important contribution to the paper.

The first, which appeared simultaneously with the leader introducing the series, was entitled "A Retrospect: Ireland." It sketched the history of Irish crime in general terms, with the parallel history of the Land League, showing particularly that this body was "appropriately started by Fenians out of Fenian funds." No evidence was cited to show direct participation by the leaders of the League or the Parliamentary party in the outrages, but a long series of inflammatory utterances by the associates of Parnell. mostly spoken with Parnell's expressed or implied sanction, was put in immediate juxtaposition with the crimes that seemed the natural consequence of such violence of language. The whole was appropriately summed up in Gladstone's own words, spoken before his conversion to Home Rule: "It is not uncharitable or rash to assume a connexion between the words of the speaker (Mr. Parnell) and the acts which followed. With fatal and painful precision the steps of crime dogged the steps of the Land League."

#### PARNELLISM AND CRIME

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language of direct complicity in conspiracy and murder, and the letters in the hands of *The Times* had not yet been disclosed. To give the articles a wider circulation they were immediately reprinted in pamphlet form. If Parnell took the obvious course of bringing an action for libel, the letters might then be produced to corroborate the general case, and the objections raised by Sir Henry James to their employment as the main basis of accusation would not apply. But none of the Irish leaders made any reply beyond an attempt to dismiss the charges as "old" and "stale." On March 18, therefore, *The Times* issued a direct challenge in a leading article entitled "An Appeal to the House of Commons":

We cannot believe that the House will allow any section of its members to treat with an affectation of indifference such statements as those deliberately advanced and supported by detailed evidence in the articles we have recently printed on "Parnellism and Crime." It is not for us to say in what manner Parliament should act, but we have no hesitation in affirming that the responsibility cannot be evaded by silently ignoring charges of the utmost gravity brought forward in the columns of The Times and without the shelter of parliamentary or any other privilege. There is a special duty incumbent upon Mr. Gladstone, upon his principal colleagues, and upon the nonofficial Liberals of weight and standing who are now brigaded with Mr. Parnell's following. . . . If . . . in spite of the testimony collected almost exclusively from sources favourable to Mr. Parnell and his cause, the Gladstonians choose to believe that the Parnellite leaders are slandered men, they are bound to vindicate that tremendous act of faith by urging and, if necessary, compelling the accused to seek redress from the slanderers. . . . For our own part, we are perfectly ready, if challenged, to establish the statements we have published. But no challenge has escaped from Mr. Parnell's prudently sealed lips, and his subordinates have evidently received orders to maintain a rigorous silence. . . . Of course, we know why Mr. Parnell and his followers pretend to be indifferent to charges constituting in the aggregate the most formidable indictment brought in modern times against any body of public men. Mr. Parnell could not, if he would, disentangle himself from his connexion with Ford and the gang of scoundrels who celebrate the anniversary of the Phoenix Park atrocity with feasting and speech-making, who coolly propose and collect money for schemes of wholesale murder, rapine, and piracy, and who mark out for assassination loyal officials and high-minded statesmen

After offering this deliberate provocation to battle in the Courts of law *The Times* held its hand for a month. A long article by Flanagan on April 12, headed "The National League at Work," contained a formidable catalogue of outrages under the system of boycott, but Parnell was only incidentally mentioned, and no attempt was made to trace direct responsibility to the Parlia-

#### OPEN CHALLENGE TO PARNELL

mentary chiefs. On April 15, however, the matter of *The Times* charges was brought directly into issue in the House of Commons, on the occasion of the second-reading debate on the Crimes Bill. Colonel Saunderson, then the principal representative of the Ulster Protestants in the House of Commons, had ended a denunciation of the Nationalists with words thus reported:

He did not accuse the hon. member for Cork and his friends who sat opposite in that House with ever having imbrued their hands in blood (Home Rule cries of "Do, do"), but he did accuse them in that House of associating with men they knew to be murderers. (Loud cheers.)

The Times described the scenes that accompanied the speech and thus concluded:

We are very glad that Colonel Saunderson should have directed the attention of the House of Commons to the connexion between some of its members and the men to whom the League owes its sinister power. That connexion is now becoming very well understood, not only in the House, but throughout the country.

By this time it had become apparent that no direct reply to the challenge of *The Times* would be forthcoming. It was decided, therefore, that the time had come to unmask the main battery. Accordingly the next issue, that of Monday, April 18, contained a reproduction in facsimile of the crucial letter No. 2 occupying the centre of the "bill page" opposite the leaders and under a short article bearing the heading "Parnellism and Crime: Mr. Parnell and the Phoenix Park Murders." The solemnity of the occasion is indicated by the fact that, for the first (and for long the only) time in the history of the paper the headlines extended over more than one column. This introductory article, which was written in the first instance by Flanagan, but to which other hands had contributed, opened thus:

In concluding our series of articles on "Parnellism and Crime" we intimated that, besides the damning facts which we there recorded, unpublished evidence existed which would bind still closer the links between the "constitutional" chiefs and the contrivers of murder and outrage. In view of the unblushing denials of Mr. Sexton and Mr. Healy on Friday night, we do not think it right to withhold any longer from public knowledge the fact that we possess and have had in our custody for some time documentary evidence which has a most serious bearing on the Parnellite conspiracy, and which, after a most careful and minute scrutiny, is, we are satisfied, quite authentic. We produce one document in facsimile to-day by a process the accuracy of which cannot be impugned, and we invite Mr. Parnell to explain how his signature came to be attached to such a letter.

The article continues with a brief résumé of the circumstances in which the letter was believed to have been written, expresses the opinion that the recipient was Egan, and outlines some of the arguments set forth above in favour of its authenticity. Nothing, of course, is said of the source from which it had been obtained by *The Times*. In conclusion, some of the public utterances of Parnell in condemnation of the murders are cited verbatim by way of contrast.

The accompanying leading article, on the general subject of the Crimes Bill, is characteristically restrained in its reference to the letter. Indeed, the actual comments on the disclosure of the day were written by the Editor. They run:

We place before our readers to-day a document the grave importance of which it would be difficult to over-estimate. It is a facsimile of a letter from Mr. Parnell, written a week after the Phoenix Park murders, excusing his public condemnation of the crime, and distinctly condoning, if not approving, the murder of Mr. Burke. It needs no further words to recommend this document to the serious consideration of the public, and especially of members of the House of Commons.

The leader then turns to other topics connected with the Bill, and mentions the letter no more. It is clear that the decision to publish the letter on this particular day was not long premeditated, and that in fact the accompanying commentary, both article and leader, had only been written in the ordinary course of the night's work. Buckle wrote to MacDonald before going home on the early morning of April 18, 1887:

# My dear MacDonald,

I hope you will like the paper as it is turned out. It has been a very bad night for me. I did not get your suggested introduction till ten o'clock when I had just finished my own. Wright was clamouring for the copy. However I made a mixture of the two, which I think will do.

I did not think it wise to refer, except indirectly & by inference, to further documents, so that we may have more chance of forcing Parnell to show his hand before we disclose all that is in our own.

The leader disappointed me, & I had to introduce a few lines myself at the beginning. But we can make use of our thunder to-morrow, when we know what Parnell is going to say.

Yours ever,

G. E. BUCKLE.

#### A BOMBSHELL FOR THE HOME RULE PARTY

The reception of the letter in the country was all that *The Times*, as the convinced opponent of the Home Rule Party, could desire. That it was obviously a clumsy forgery—as subsequent speakers and writers have often declared—was very far, indeed, from being the general opinion at the moment. On the contrary, it was widely recognized that this was just the sort of letter that Parnell might well have written at the time when he requested police protection. Mr. Barry O'Brien, the biographer of Parnell, quotes a Liberal friend on how he opened the paper at the breakfast table:

The first thing which met my eye was that infernal letter. Well, I did not much care about my breakfast after reading it. "There goes Home Rule," said I, "and the Liberal Party too."

As for Unionist opinion, it was unanimous that a fatal blow had been dealt to the Home Rule cause. It was significant that even among the majority of Home Rule Liberals faith in the accuracy of *The Times* so far outweighed confidence in their new political ally that the idea of forgery occurred to very few.

According to the biographers of Parnell, he came down to the House in the evening of April 18, and was asked by Mr. Harrington whether he had seen *The Times*. He answered "No," and was then shown a copy in the library. Parnell made no expression of surprise or indignation. He

seemed perfectly unconcerned, and simply pointed to the S in his supposed signature, and observed in a casual tone of voice: "I did not make an S like that since 1878."

This apparent failure to realize the gravity of his situation caused no small consternation among Parnell's followers. However, he was induced at a late hour that same evening to repudiate the letter in more vehement terms from his place in the House of Commons. He referred to the letter as "a villainous and barefaced forgery" and went on, in flat contradiction to the story afterwards published by his widow:

When I first heard of this precious concoction—for I heard of it before I saw it, because I do not take in or even read *The Times* usually—when I heard that a letter of this description, bearing my signature, had been published in *The Times*, I supposed that some autograph of mine had fallen into the hands of some person for whom it had not been intended, and that it had been made use of in this way. But when I saw what purported to be my signature, I saw plainly that it was an audacious and unblushing fabrication.

He went on to criticize the signature in detail, and finally summed up his reply by saying:

The subject-matter of the letter is preposterous on the surface. The phraseology of it is absurd—as absurd as any phraseology that could be attributed to me could possibly be. In every part of it it bears absolute and irrefutable evidence of want of genuineness and want of authenticity. Politics are come to a pretty pass in this country when a leader of a party of eighty-six members has to stand up at ten minutes past one in the House of Commons in order to defend himself from an anonymous fabrication such as that which is contained in *The Times* of this morning.

This speech was delivered too late for immediate comment in *The Times*. But on April 20 the paper made its reply. Flanagan, in an article headed "Mr. Parnell's Explanations," followed the Irish leader into every minute detail of his criticism of the signature, affirming that *The Times* had in its possession undoubted autographs of Parnell, in which a parallel could be found for each separate peculiarity of the facsimile signature, down to the shapes of parts of individual letters that Parnell had asserted to be foreign to his habit. These autographs, moreover, dated from the actual time of the Phoenix Park murders. As to the content of the letter, facts already cited in "Parnellism and Crime" were brought forward again to show its harmony with what was known of Parnell's conduct in 1882.

The leading article took broader and more general ground, once more repeating the challenge to Parnell to meet *The Times* in a Court of law.

If those charges are false, Mr. Parnell and his friends can resort to an easy and effectual remedy. The Courts of law are open to them for the vindication of their character and the punishment of their maligners. . . . Mr. Parnell would be able to go into the witness-box and to repeat in detail his denial that he had ever written, dictated, or signed the letter of which we published the facsimile on Monday morning.

After publishing this leader *The Times* waited for the issue of a writ by Parnell, but no writ came. The reasons why Parnell refrained from taking any proceedings to vindicate his reputation belong to the biography of Parnell rather than to the history of *The Times*, and have been fully set forth elsewhere. The Irish members collectively demanded a Government inquiry into the charges made against them, but Lord Salisbury's Government pointed out that their proper course was to sue *The Times* for libel, and offered them the services of the Attorney-General, Sir Richard Webster, if they chose to do so. The offer was declined, and the matter was, for the time being, allowed to drop, Parnell's character remaining gravely compromised in the eyes not only of his political opponents but of many supporters also.

## PARNELL HOLDS HIS FIRE

Meanwhile The Times, with the other letters still in its possession undisclosed, continued the series of "Parnellism and Crime." Three articles, published on May 13 and 20 and June 1, bore the general heading "Behind the Scenes in America," and sought to prove the existence of a widespread conspiracy among Irishmen in the United States, with the connivance of the political leaders at home, to further by pecuniary and other aid the policy of outrage in Ireland. The author, whose name was, of course, not given, was Mr. (afterwards Sir) Robert Anderson, Adviser to the Home Office in matters relating to Irish crime from 1868, though he had ceased to be "Political Adviser" at the time of writing them; and the articles contained a great mass of information collected for his official purposes, mainly by a very remarkable secret agent in America, of whom we shall have more to say hereafter. They amplified and emphasized charges that had already been made in substance by Flanagan's articles.

These articles on "Behind the Scenes in America" provoked a conflict with a certain Frank Hugh O'Donnell, a former Irish Member of Parliament who was then living in Germany. This gentleman wrote a long letter to The Times, which was published in the issue of June 17. The writer described himself as inspired for many years with repugnance by the Parnellite system, but wished to correct what he described as mis-statements of fact in the articles, in that they associated Parnell and his political associates with the crimes of Byrne, the fugitive secretary of the Home Rule Confederation and Land League. Simultaneously with the letter The Times published a reply in a leader in which not only was the association of the Parnellites with Byrne maintained, but O'Donnell himself, who had been Vice-President and Secretary of the Home Rule Confederation, was included in the charge. O'Donnell interpreted the article, taken in conjunction with those on "Parnellism and Crime," as charging him with complicity in the crimes of Byrne, including the Phoenix Park murders, and sued the Proprietor and printer of The Times for libel.

Before the case came on for hearing the aspect of affairs in Ireland had undergone considerable change. Mr. Arthur Balfour, the new Chief Secretary, succeeded in putting through a new Crimes Act, which empowered the Lord Lieutenant to proclaim such a body as the League as a "dangerous association," which would render all its meetings illegal assemblies, and might be preliminary to its suppression and the prosecution of the individuals taking part in its proceedings. The Times reminded the Government of the urgency of such a proclamation of the League

as soon as the Royal Assent should be given to the Bill, and supported its case by a fresh series of articles under the title "The Working of the League." Their purport was to show once more that the League had worked before the Crimes Act, and was working still, by systematic methods of criminal intimidation and outrage. Thus throughout the year 1887 *The Times* constantly kept the subject of Irish terrorism and its support by the Irish leaders before its readers' eyes.

The case of O'Donnell v. Walter and Another was heard by Lord Coleridge, the Lord Chief Justice, and a special jury from July 2 to July 5, 1888, a year later than the publication of O'Donnell's letter. The case for the plaintiff has been already indicated, its essence being the contention that every charge levelled by The Times at the Irish leaders generally was a charge against him, he being at the time one of the leaders of the party. The Attorney-General and Sir Henry James, for The Times, argued that the plaintiff was never accused by name and was not in fact one of the Irish leaders; that, indeed, he was deliberately attempting to raise a false issue and get the question of the letters tried without making Parnell or any of the real leaders a party to the case. In opening the case for the defence the Attorney-General read several of the incriminating letters, including No. 2, and announced his readiness to call expert witnesses to their authenticity, but Lord Coleridge, accepting his main contention, refused to allow the general libels on the Irish party to be tried there, and directed that the issues be limited to the words relating to O'Donnell personally. This was exactly what The Times desired, being more than ever determined to bring Parnell himself into a place where he could be cross-examined. But it left O'Donnell without even the semblance of a case, and the jury found for the defendants without leaving their box. Lord Coleridge gave judgment accordingly.

The effect of this case, whether O'Donnell had been intentionally used as a stalking-horse or not, was to show the Irish leaders that they could not fight the question of the letters with any sort of limited liability. But Parnell was still unwilling to proceed by way of a writ for libel, and therefore asked the House of Commons to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the genuineness of the facsimile letter. The Government declined, but offered instead to set up a Special Commission, composed of three Judges, who should examine the whole body of the charges contained in "Parnellism and Crime." The Times itself saw no reason for supplementing the ordinary processes of the law. It knew how great and serious were its risks and responsibilities under the law

## SPECIAL COMMISSION APPOINTED

of libel, and had challenged those whom it attacked to take action. Nevertheless, as it believed in its case and had nothing to hide, it felt that it was its duty to throw no difficulties in the way of any judicial and full inquiry which the Government thought it right to institute provided it did not put The Times in a position worse than it would occupy before the normal legal tribunal. But the Bill to give effect to the Ministerial proposal was bitterly opposed by both the Home Rule Liberals and the Irish, who wished to limit the inquiry to the question of the letter. The Government, naturally, insisted on a full investigation of all the charges, and used their majority to force the passage of the Bill. The Bill received the Royal Assent in August at the close of the Session, but, before its passage into law prevented the prosecution of ordinary legal proceedings in regard to "Parnellism and Crime," Parnell started a libel action against The Times. claiming £100.000 damages-not in the Royal Courts of Justice in London, but in the Court of Session in Edinburgh.

The three Judges who were appointed to serve on the Special Commission to inquire "into the charges and allegations made against certain Members of Parliament and other persons by the defendants in the recent trial of an action entitled 'O'Donnell v. Walter and Another'" were the Rt. Hon. Sir James Hannen. President of the Probate. Divorce and Admiralty Court, and two Justices of the High Court, Mr. Justice Day and Mr. Justice A. L. Smith. The tribunal was one with which criticism could find little fault. The President, who became eventually a Lord of Appeal and Lord Hannen, stood in the front rank among his brethren for dignity, impartiality, legal knowledge and common sense. A. L. Smith had a high reputation for efficiency, and Day had considerable experience in criminal law. No one of them could be called a political Judge; not one of the three had ever sat in the House of Commons. The choice of Day may have been due to his religion; like the great majority of the Members of Parliament impugned he was a Roman Catholic. But because the Nationalists suspected-or, perhaps, knew-that, like the English Catholics in general, he was not a Home Ruler, his name was the only one to which any exception was taken. It may have been for that reason that, while the President actively directed the whole investigation and A. L. Smith occasionally intervened with effect, Day listened throughout but never spoke.

Of the six counsel appearing for *The Times* the chief were the Attorney-General (Sir Richard Webster, afterwards Lord Alverstone and Chief Justice) and Sir Henry James. It was usual at that date for the Attorney-General to accept briefs from

private clients in addition to his Government work, which then had not reached the vast extent it has assumed in recent years, and in the reports of important private cases in the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth centuries the Attorney-General of the day is frequently to be found on one side or the other. But, outside the profession, and to some extent inside it, the opinion had grown that the practice was a scandal, and the next Government after the Commission ordered it to be discontinued. Parnell was represented by the Oueen's Counsel, who had been Attorney-General in Gladstone's Home Rule Government, Sir Charles Russell (afterwards Lord Russell of Killowen and Chief Justice). along with H. H. Asquith, a future Liberal Prime Minister; while R. T. Reid (afterwards Lord Loreburn and Lord Chancellor), Frank Lockwood (afterwards Solicitor-General) and others appeared for the sixty-two other members against whom evidence was to be given.

The Commissioners sat at the Law Courts and held a preliminary meeting on September 17, 1888. At the outset they made a ruling that most gravely embarrassed the paper. Had an ordinary action for libel been brought by Parnell he would have been required to indicate the passages from The Times of which he complained, and the defence would have been called upon to justify those passages by evidence, and those alone—an undertaking of limited scope and costliness. The Times hoped that some similar procedure would be adopted by the Commission. Instead, the ruling given was that the paper must proceed as if the Irish members were being charged on an indictment containing all the matters alleged in the articles, and counsel for The Times must accept the position of the prosecution in such a case. Consequently, the burden of proof for each statement of fact made in "Parnellism and Crime" lay upon the paper; the admissions contained in Irish Nationalist papers on which so many of them had been based would not be sufficient evidence. but actual witnesses to them must be brought over from Ireland for oral examination in Court. There were 494 witnesses, and the whole of the expense of calling them, which in an ordinary prosecution would have fallen upon the Crown, had to be borne by The Times. Nor was there any question, as there would have been in a libel action, of recovering costs if the charges were proved. Thus, the paper was faced from the outset, whether it succeeded or failed in its struggle with Parnell, with an expenditure running into many thousands of pounds.

Now that the authenticity of the letters was about to be probed in so searching a way the Attorney-General insisted that Houston

#### RICHARD PIGOTT

should be called upon to take the paper's representatives into his confidence and disclose all he knew of their history. With some natural reluctance Houston complied.

In order to understand the story he told it must be remembered that in 1885, until the very last month, when the rumour of Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule was circulated, he and the Liberal Party were at daggers drawn with the Parnellites. Lord Richard Grosvenor was the Liberal Whip, and as such was organizing schemes to defeat the Parnellites, especially in the elections in Ireland. Houston in that year, being then 22 years old, was entrusted by his political friends with the preparation of a project to catch the Nationalists unprepared. The idea was to prepare surprise Unionist candidatures in a small number of selected Home Rule constituencies in Ireland, without hope of capturing many, but in the expectation that a fillip might be given to Unionism outside Ulster if even one or two fell. He was travelling rapidly about Ireland on this mission—which in actual fact proved a complete failure—when he received a telegram from Lord Richard Grosvenor, asking him to interview a certain Richard Pigott in Kingstown.

Almost anyone with a few years' experience of the political and journalistic life of Dublin would have had something to say about this Pigott, but to young Houston his name was as yet quite unknown. He found, in an unpretentious home in Kingstown, an elderly man with a large beard, a soft voice, and a hesitating manner, who supposed that he had come about the pamphlet he, Pigott, had offered for sale to Lord Richard Grosvenor as election literature. This pamphlet, which proved to be a carefully compiled survey of Parnellite finance, demonstrating that some £100,000 more had been received than was accounted for, was eagerly bought for £60 by Houston, who was convinced that he was on the track of important and guilty secrets of the Home Rule party. He reported his discovery to Lord Richard, who, without question, advanced him another £100 for further research. With this money he engaged Pigott to go deeper into the whole subject.

The object of the quest put before Pigott was a perfectly definite one: starting from the lacunae in the accounts of the Land League, to bring home to the Parnellite party direct responsibility for financing murder in Ireland. He was not set to search for letters of any kind. But Pigott, one of those seedy Irishmen, so familiar in every generation, who live in a state of chronic and incurable insolvency, was quick to catch the scent of money easily

earned. In his hands the inquiry began to branch out in unfore-seen directions, always requiring fresh financial support. He found it necessary to travel extensively, visiting America once and Paris often, always at Houston's expense. Houston obtained the necessary money from three leading Unionists, Lord Richard Grosvenor, Sir Rowland Blennerhassett, and Mr. Jonathan Hogg, and it is a remarkable tribute to the force of character of this unknown young man that sums amounting to hundreds of pounds were entrusted to his discretion without his being called upon to give any account of the way in which they were spent.

Pigott went on his researches in a leisurely manner, living in unfamiliar comfort on Houston's allowance of a guinea a day, besides expenses, and eventually reported in March, 1886, that incriminating documents were to be found in a certain black bag in Paris. He furnished Houston with copies of them, and, armed with these, Houston paid his original visit to Buckle in April. He had previously offered the copies to W. T. Stead, then editor of the Pall Mall Gazette, but Stead declined to be associated with the matter. Acting on Buckle's hint that The Times could be concerned with nothing short of the originals, Houston then resumed negotiations with Pigott in order to obtain them.

Pigott went to Paris in July to get the letters, and in due course asked Houston to come over and meet him there. Houston went, accompanied by Dr. Maguire, Professor of Moral Philosophy in Trinity College, Dublin, who was a leader of Irish Unionist opinion. On the night of their arrival Pigott came to their hotel after dark, bringing what he represented as the original letters with him. At his desire—for he still insisted on concealment—only Houston saw him, but took the letters into an adjoining room to be examined by Maguire before purchase. Pigott told Houston that the letters belonged to two men named Maurice Murphy and Tom Brown, who were waiting downstairs for their money, and must be paid in cash then and there if Houston was to have the letters. After a short inspection Maguire agreed with Houston that the letters were genuine, and lent him the money to pay for them. Houston then went back into the other room and handed over to Pigott an order on Cook's for £500 for the letters, and another for 100 guineas as payment for his services. Pigott departed to hand over the £500 to Murphy and Brown, whom Houston deliberately avoided seeing, that being, according to Pigott, the condition under which he had been enabled to obtain the letters. Houston returned to London and took the letters, first to Lord Hartington and then to The Times, in the manner outlined on page 44.

## HOW HOUSTON OBTAINED THE LETTERS

There was nothing particularly surprising in this account of Houston's negotiations. The Times had all along been aware that not all the hands through which the letters had passed could be expected to be clean. Now that this Pigott, however, had been named as a principal intermediary in the transaction, it was necessary to make some inquiries about him. Wilson, the leaderwriter, and Flanagan turned out to know him well by repute. He was, it seemed, a down-at-heels and mildly disreputable Irish journalist—squalidly dishonest rather than ruffianly or violent like most of the men concerned in the murder campaign. At one time he had controlled a substantial newspaper called the Irishman, but after trying to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds of the Home Rule controversy—mainly, it seemed, for his own personal enrichment—he had brought the paper into a financial morass from which Parnell had rescued him by buying it. Further study of his record disclosed some decidedly tricky behaviour in this and other transactions, and it was clear that Pigott in his time had sailed perilously near to the wind of blackmail. In short, he was a man on whose honesty or veracity no litigant would care to stake his case.

But *The Times* did not consider that its case rested upon the credit of Pigott. Walter and Soames, with their counsel, were perfectly ready to believe that any amount of villainy might have gone to the procuring of the letters, nor did they assert with any confidence that Pigott's account to Houston of how he had got them was true. They relied, and had relied from the beginning, wholly upon the internal evidence of the letters themselves, tested as they had been by the chief living authority on handwriting. It was by no means necessary to their argument to tell the history of the letters at all.

But they soon became aware that the defence also had discovered Pigott, and that the case they would put forward would be that Pigott had forged the letters. The first act of Parnell's solicitors was to serve a subpoena on him, and in October Mr. Labouchere, entering the lists as a free-lance on behalf of Parnell, succeeded in inducing the alleged forger to come to England, where he confronted him with the Irish leader himself. What passed between them was unknown to *The Times*. But Sir Richard Webster, though appearing for *The Times* as a private litigant, had been put by the Commissioners practically into the position of counsel for the Crown conducting a criminal prosecution, and the tradition of his calling is clear that the duty of counsel in such circumstances

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Henry Labouchere, M.P., Founder, Proprietor and Editor of the Society Journal *Truth*, and a Radical Leader.

is to lay before the Commission all the relevant evidence in his possession, though some of it may tend in favour of the defence. Therefore, though he knew the other side had been interviewing the admittedly unstable Pigott, and though it would be tactically to his advantage to leave them to call him so that he might crossexamine him as a hostile witness, he decided that it was his duty to call this witness himself. He adhered to this course even though Pigott, who was markedly reluctant to venture into a Court of law on behalf of either side, wrote to The Times solicitor that "it is my settled conviction that, should I have to appear, the crossexamination would most certainly tend to discredit my examination-in-chief. It must of necessity do so, as I feel utterly unable, from defect of memory and other causes, to refute satisfactorily the many allegations founded on remote events of my career as a Nationalist journalist that are now certain to be brought up in judgment against me." By insisting on the appearance of this very unpromising witness, Webster certainly acted with high professional integrity and served the interests of justice, but he surrendered a strong position, which The Times might not improperly have claimed.

Several months, however, were to elapse before the evidence relating to the letters could be put before the Court. Some idea of the magnitude of the investigation is given by the length of the speech, occupying four days' sessions, with which the Attorney-General opened his case. There followed for week after week and month after month a procession of Irishmen in and out of the witness-box who testified to the details of the offences alleged by The Times. The apologists of Parnell have objected to this piling up of evidence covering the whole field of the charges on the ground that these were essentially incapable of judicial investigation, and that the effect of the elaborate attempts to prove them was merely to waste the time of the Commission with irrelevant matter and postpone the crucial question of the letters on which the whole case turned. Such weight as there may be in this contention falls rather upon Lord Salisbury's Government than upon P.H.S. The Times had all along realized that its general indictment against the Irish malcontents was hardly such as could be absolutely either proved or disproved by process of law. On the other hand, it had from the first hoped to bring the genuineness or falsity of the letters to issue in the course of ordinary legal proceedings, which it had given Parnell every opportunity and inducement to institute. Parnell had refused to avail himself of his constitutional remedy, and the Government had offered him instead this special tribunal of investigation, which could hardly be limited to one point, but must cover the whole field of the charges. So far was *The Times* from wishing the inquiry to take the form it did that its representatives were taken wholly by surprise, and the Attorney-General was not even in Court when the President, at the preliminary proceedings, ruled that *The Times* must assume the burden of a public prosecutor. That burden once imposed, no other course was open than to substantiate each detail of the allegations, however great the expenditure of the time of the Commission and the resources of the paper. Even as regards the letters it was essential to show that the relations of the Parnellites with crime in Ireland on the one hand and with American promoters of dynamite outrages on the other were such as to make a correspondence of the kind credible and, indeed, natural.

The effect of the evidence called by the Attorney-General concerning the alleged conspiracy at large will be sufficiently shown when we come to summarize the findings of the Commission. But one very remarkable witness to the general case against the Land League demands individual mention. This was an Englishman who had lived in the United States for twenty-eight years under the false name of Henri Le Caron, and during most of that time had occupied himself in investigation of the doings of the Irish secret societies in America. He had posed as a Fenian of the most advanced views and had succeeded in gaining admission to, and even promotion to offices of trust and responsibility in, the criminal organizations, whose oaths of secrecy he took with the express object of betraying their counsels to the authorities at home. He had worked throughout in close concert with Scotland Yard, and particularly with Anderson, the adviser on political crime at the Home Office, and it was in fact he, though this was not disclosed, who supplied Anderson with the facts on which the second series of articles on "Parnellism and Crime" was based. He still remained unsuspected by the emigrant criminals he had duped, but in the present emergency he came forward to disclose the secrets of his work to the Commission. Thereby, of course, he made the continuance of his work impossible, and incidentally risked his life even more recklessly than he had done during his long years of concealed activity.

Le Caron was able to bring out into the light all the details of the conspiracy in America. These bore out in the main the accusations *The Times* had made of the close relation between the political movement in Great Britain and the criminal plotters in the United States. In the course of his evidence he told the Commissioners a curious story of a visit he had paid to England

<sup>1</sup> His real name was Thomas Willis Beach.

in 1881, about a year before the Phoenix Park murders. Still posing as an emissary of the men of violence in the United States he had a conversation with Parnell in a corridor of the House of Commons, in which the Nationalist leader made use of a number of expressions of sympathy with the aims and methods of Le Caron's supposed associates. He was able to quote Parnell's actual words as:

There need be no misunderstanding; we are working for a common purpose—for the independence of Ireland, just as you are doing; for I have long since ceased to believe that anything but force of arms will ever bring about the redemption of Ireland.

Later, still referring to Parnell, Le Caron said:

He told me that he did not see any reason why an insurrectionary movement, when we were prepared to send money and men who were armed and organized—why a successful insurrectionary movement should not be inaugurated in Ireland. He said that, judging from the outlook, they would soon have in the Land League treasury £100,000, which would form a pretty good nucleus. He added, "You fellows ought to do as well as that."

When Le Caron left the witness-box after occupying it for a week and enduring a prolonged and ruthless cross-examination by Sir Charles Russell, he had not been seriously shaken either in his general account of conspiracy in America, or in his memory of these compromising utterances by Parnell himself. Le Caron's evidence was completed on Tuesday, February 12, and on the Thursday the Attorney-General opened the subject of the letters by calling Soames, who identified them. They had all been photographed, and copies were now handed to the three Judges and to counsel. Chief among them was, of course, No. 2, which had been published in facsimile; but of almost equal importance was No. 1, which had not been published in The Times, but had been read in Court by the Attorney-General in the case of O'Donnell v. Walter. It will be convenient to give the text of this document now. It read as follows, and the peculiarities of spelling and phrase should be noted:

9/1/82

Dear E.

What are these fellows waiting for? This inaction is inexcusable, our best men are in prison, and nothing is being done.

Let there be an end of this hesitency. Prompt action is called for. You undertook to make it hot for old Forster and Co. Let us have some evidence of your power to do so.

My health is good\_thanks.

Your's very truly

Chas, S Parnell.

## THE COMMISSION AND THE LETTERS

Soames gave a short account of the history of these letters, so far as it was known to The Times, and defined for the first time the conclusions reached at Printing House Square concerning the handwriting. These were that the body of the principal letters had been written by Campbell, Parnell's secretary, and that they had then been signed by Parnell himself. He fortified these conclusions by producing undoubted specimens of the handwriting of Campbell and Parnell, as well as of Egan, by whom five of the letters purported to be signed. But he made no pretension to be an expert in handwriting, and wished to go on to cite the professional judgment of Inglis. Russell, however, objected, and this evidence was ruled inadmissible at that stage. Since subsequent events prevented Inglis from ever being called, his belief in the authenticity of the letters, which was of high significance as vindicating the bona fides of The Times, was in fact never brought before the Commission.

Soames was cross-examined in detail by Russell on the question of the handwriting, but no point of any great importance for either side was established. The name of Pigott, however, began during this cross-examination to attract a good deal of notice, and Russell took the opportunity to discredit this witness in advance. Among other things, Soames disclosed that Pigott had attempted unsuccessfully to extort £5,000 from *The Times* as the price of his evidence.

The letters having now been laid before the Commission, the Attorney-General proceeded to read Parnell's public denials of their authenticity in the House of Commons and elsewhere. He then called MacDonald.

MacDonald did not make a good witness. He was 67 years old, and, though his colleagues at Printing House Square had not yet realized it, there can be little doubt that he was already feeling the effects of age. He had worked arduously for many years, and his holidays had been few and short; the business arising out of the preparation for the Commission itself had placed a specially heavy burden on his shoulders, and there are signs that his strength was beginning to break down under it. He had, in fact, only a few months to live. Though he had been in his prime a voluminous correspondent on behalf of *The Times*, and had wielded a trenchant pen, his surviving letter-books show that in the months preceding the meeting of the Commission he had definitely lost control of the business of the department that he had administered so ably and so long. His letters from 1887 onwards are few, halting, and sometimes despondent. In addition

to this physical and mental flagging, MacDonaldwas handicapped as a witness by the fact that, as explained above, the chief conduct of the negotiations with Houston had been taken into Walter's own hands. But Walter himself, conforming to the custom of the office was not going to give evidence; neither was Buckle, for a similar reason. The only persons in Printing House Square that could be called were the Manager or the Printer. Hence MacDonald was put forward as the chief witness to transactions in which he had not been the prime mover. He was destined to bear the brunt of Asquith's attack, and the ordeal proved too much for him.

The substance of The Times case, which MacDonald was called on to expound, has already been explained. He had to show the Commissioners that the letters came to The Times very much as the evidence of an informer comes to counsel for the prosecution. In fact, the Phoenix Park murders themselves might have provided a close analogy. Just as the Crown in prosecuting the murderers on that occasion had to rely on the evidence of Carey, and disregard the admitted villainy of the man on the obvious ground that informers' evidence is only obtainable from villains, so The Times had accepted the letters without inquiry into the means of their procuring, well knowing that such letters could only have been got from a tainted source. It was the business of MacDonald to show on behalf of *The Times* that the authority for the letters was their own intrinsic evidence of genuineness; against him Asquith set out to show that their authority was merely the word of Pigott—whom Russell was prepared to demolish.

The effect of several hours of Asquith's cross-examination was to leave the impression that the official account given by The Times of its dealing with the letters was confused and incoherent. and possibly to create a suspicion that something was being concealed. He showed very skilfully that no inquiry whatever had been made into the external evidence for the authenticity of the letters, or into the means whereby they came into Houston's hands. With no less skill he avoided giving MacDonald any opportunity to make the essential point, that informers' evidence is never obtainable except on these terms. So Asquith was able to hint, without ever saying, not only that the management of The Times had been criminally careless, but that Houston's part in the proceedings had been mercenary or even corrupt—a suggestion, of course, legitimate enough for counsel to make, but one for which there is no foundation whatever. A few questions and answers from the cross-examination will illustrate its general character ·

## ASOUITH OVERPOWERS THE MANAGER

Do not let us have any misapprehension; you told the Attorney-General that you had spent altogether on the whole series of letters £1,780?—No, I stated that we had paid £1,780 for the five letters of Mr. Parnell and the six letters of Patrick Egan.

Did Houston say that he had paid £1,780 for these 11 letters?—Yes.

He did not tell you to whom ?—No.

Or how ?-No.

Or when ?-No.

Or where ?-No.

Showed you no voucher or receipt ?-None whatever.

No particulars, whether in items or a lump sum ?—No.

Did he represent to you that he was ready to let *The Times* have the letters for publication on being recouped?—Yes.

Nothing more ?-No.

And you have not, as I understand, up to this moment investigated the details of Mr. Houston's alleged expenditure?—I have not.

You have taken his word for it throughout ?—I have.

When MacDonald left the witness-box on February 19, the letters were left to rest wholly on the internal evidence of their genuineness. This had been most carefully investigated, and the Attorney-General now proposed to call Inglis, the handwriting expert, to swear to his belief in their authenticity. Thus, whatever subsequent turn the inquiry might take, he would at least put beyond doubt the bona fides of The Times, by showing that they had substantial grounds, the best obtainable under the limited conditions of their inquiry, for their acceptance of the letters.

But when the Attorney-General announced the name of his next witness, Russell rose to protest. He claimed that the expert evidence should not be called until the whole story of the acquisition of the letters had been told, and in this claim he was upheld by the Commissioners. The course ultimately taken by the proceedings made it impossible for Inglis to be called at all. The whole case for *The Times* was thus left unstated, and the imputation that the letters had been printed without inquiry unanswered.

Accepting the ruling of the Judges, however, the Attorney-General now called Houston. Houston made an excellent witness. He was young, vigorous, and self-confident, and, having to speak for himself alone, was not weighed down by that sense of heavy responsibility which had so obviously oppressed MacDonald. He gave a straightforward account of his negotiations in obtaining the letters and was not shaken in cross-examination. The most that Russell could extract from him was that his quest had led him into the company of some very unsavoury, treacherous, and violent characters, and in particular it appeared that Pigott had

been nervously anxious that all documentary evidence of his own doings should be destroyed. Houston admitted that, as his inquiries proceeded, he became aware that Pigott was a distinctly suspicious character and that charges of forgery had been made against him, but he stoutly maintained his belief that, when Pigott swore to him that these letters were genuine, he spoke the truth.

Houston's cross-examination, followed by a short re-examination by the Attorney-General, was completed early in the afternoon of February 20, and then Richard Pigott entered the box.

By this time *The Times* strategical plan had already gone badly awry. At best they could regard Pigott as a specimen brought up from that Dublin underworld into which Houston had been compelled to descend in order to get the letters—a mere unsavoury go-between through whose rather dirty hands valuable documents had chanced to pass. They had been manoeuvred into the position of apparently putting forward Pigott—originally their opponents' witness—as the guarantor of the authenticity of the documents themselves. This, however, never had been, and was not now, the real view of *The Times* and its counsel. They still believed absolutely that the letters were genuine, and the corner-stone of their belief was not Pigott but Inglis.

The Attorney-General, true to his professional principles, took Pigott scrupulously through the full story of how he purported to have obtained the letters and transferred them to Houston. According to the witness's story the existence of the letters had first been made known to him by a certain Maurice Murphy, who had formerly been one of his compositors, and had since become an agent of the Clan-na-Gael in New York. Pigott thought that the name given by this Murphy was false, and whether he had any real existence has never since been checked. If Murphy had been discovered or proved not to exist the main outstanding problem concerning the letters, which we shall have to indicate shortly, would no doubt be solved. There followed the story of the black bag in Paris, and the sale of the letters to Houston and Maguire in one room of the hotel while Murphy and Brown (a persona muta in the story and another possibly fictitious character) waited below for their money.

Having got from Pigott his detailed account of the actual quest of the letters, Webster went on to come more closely to grips with the other side. He proceeded to question the witness about his dealings with Parnell and Labouchere since the Commission had been appointed.

## PIGOTT IN THE WITNESS-BOX

Pigott's version of the story accused the two politicians of a direct attempt to bribe him to give perjured evidence in their favour. He said that he had been brought over from Ireland by emissaries of Labouchere and had interviewed Labouchere and Parnell together in the former's house in Grosvenor Gardens. Labouchere had previously cautioned him not to mention money in the presence of Parnell. At the interview Parnell claimed to be in possession of evidence that would convict Pigott of having forged all the letters, and threatened a prosecution for perjury unless he came over to their side. During the conversation Mr. George Lewis, the solicitor for the Irish members, came in, a happening that Pigott regarded as a trap. But Lewis

rose from his chair and took me by the hand, and declared that if I would only follow out his directions and concede (sic) to the wishes of his clients, he would be my very best friend.

## Shortly afterwards

Mr Labouchere beckoned me outside the door. I forgot to say that in the course of conversation I stated that I did not know exactly whether I had been promised £5,000 or had demanded it.

One or the other?—One or the other. Outside, referring to that, Mr Labouchere said that he himself was prepared to pay me £1,000, but of course I was not to mention anything about it to Mr Parnell....

What did you say to Mr Labouchere?—I said I thought it was a very handsome sum. I did not say whether I would take it or no, only I raised no objection. I took it that he understood I agreed to take that sum. On returning into the room I said that nothing would induce me to come into a witness-box and swear a lie. Mr Lewis explained to me that the necessity of my going into the witness-box might be avoided by adopting his suggestion that I was to write to *The Times* to state that I believed the letters were forgeries, or that I had forged them myself. At all events, I was to acquaint *The Times* with the fact that I believed the letters were forgeries, and thereupon *The Times* would naturally withdraw the letters. Of course, Mr Labouchere's offer was to stand good, I understood.

A long correspondence between Pigott and Labouchere was read, tending to show the existence of a conspiracy to corrupt the witness, and at the end of his examination-in-chief Pigott told the Commission that he had reason to fear assassination by the agents of the League if he should give evidence inimical to their interests.

The sitting of February 21, Pigott's second day in the box, was far advanced when Sir Charles Russell rose to cross-examine. He began by asking the witness to sit down at a table and write

certain words at his dictation. The words were "livelihood," "likelihood," his own name, "Proselytism," "Patrick Egan," "P. Egan," and, thrown in at the end as if by an afterthought, "hesitancy"—" with a small 'h,' "Russell added, as if that were the only point about the word in which he was interested.

Pigott wrote and handed the paper back to Russell, who made no immediate reference to the matter but proceeded quietly with his cross-examination on minor points. After about half an hour he approached the subject of "Parnellism and Crime," and, having reminded the witness and the Commission that the first article appeared on March 7, 1887, asked Pigott whether he was previously aware of the intention to publish it. At Pigott's denial he expressed complete surprise, and ostentatiously gave him an opportunity to correct himself.

You have already said that you were aware, although you did not know they were to appear in *The Times*, that there were grave charges to be made against Mr. Parnell and the leading members of the Land League?—I was not aware till the publication actually commenced.

Do you swear that ?—I do.

No mistake about that?—No.

Suddenly Russell stooped to the shelf below the desk before him and took from it a bundle of papers. He showed one to the witness, who identified it as a letter written by him to Archbishop Walsh of Dublin on March 4, 1887—three days before the publication of the first article on "Parnellism and Crime." In it Pigott had warned the Archbishop of an impending attack on the Irish party, and claimed to be able to indicate the means by which it might be parried.

Under Russell's cross-examination Pigott resolutely refused to admit that the attack to which he alluded was that about to be launched by *The Times*. Clearly he saw that, if he once admitted that he was referring to the "facsimile letter," the irresistible inference from the assertion that he could meet it must be that he knew the letter to be forged. But he was utterly unable to suggest anything else to which his reference might be attributed. A further letter to the Archbishop was produced, a passage in which led to the following piece of dialogue, which ended the day's session:

What do you say to that ?—That proves to me clearly that I had not the letters in my mind.

Then if it proves to you clearly that you had not the letters in your mind, what had you? It must have been something far more serious. What was it?—I have no idea.

Can you give their Lordships any clue of the most indirect kind as to what it was ?—I cannot.

Or from whom you heard it?—No.

#### PIGOTT A FORGETFUL WITNESS

Or when ?-Or when.

Or where ?-Or where.

Have you ever mentioned this fearful matter, whatever it is, to anybody?—No.

It is still locked up—hermetically sealed in your own bosom?—No, because it has gone away out of my bosom.

In the midst of the laughter that greeted this last reply the Commission rose for the day.

When Pigott re-entered the box next day his credit was already very badly shaken, and Russell proceeded to drive home the attack without mercy. Producing more correspondence with the Archbishop he showed beyond question that Pigott had been trying to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. At the very time when the witness had been in Houston's pay on behalf of *The Times* he had been writing to the Archbishop offering information that would defeat the paper's attack, and that information, in default of any other explanation Pigott might offer—and he offered none—could be nothing except evidence that he knew the letters to be forged.

Having thus held the witness up to obloquy as a traitor to both sides, he produced copies of a number of letters written to the witness by Parnell and Egan shortly before the dates of the compromising documents, and it turned out that these letters bore a most curious resemblance in phraseology to those which Pigott had sold to Houston. Phrase after phrase was shown to be identically repeated, and even the dates supported the coincidences. For instance, a genuine letter of June 16, 1881, contained the words "I am sure you will feel"; the identical words were also to be found in one of the doubtful letters dated June 16, 1882. Having established a number of these coincidences Russell proceeded to drive home the inference:

Could you account for this on any other hypothesis than that the man who forged the letters had before him the genuine letters from which he copied the phrases?—I do not think it is an unusual thing for a man who writes letters constantly to use the same words and phrases.

And in the same collocation?—(Answer inaudible.)

To use the same phrases on the same day of the same month in recurrent (sic) years—to have, in fact, a kind of anniversary use of phrases? Can you suggest, except on the hypothesis of fraud and forgery, how this coincidence came about?—Assuming that there was fraud and forgery on the other side, that the copies were forged—

But assuming that there was no forgery on the other side?—I should say the coincidence would be curious.

Impossible to get over?—Certainly not.

How do you get over it?—It is not unusual for a man to use the same words and phrases. I do it myself constantly.

Supposing you wanted to forge a document, would it be any help to you to have before you a genuine letter written by the man whose writing you wished to forge?—Yes.

How would you use it ?—Copy it, of course.

How would you proceed to use it ?—I cannot say.

Just give us your best idea?—I do not pretend to have any experience in that line, so I cannot say.

Just fancy yourself called upon to forge one of these letters?—
I decline to put myself in that position.

Let me suggest to you. Would you, for instance, put delicate tissue paper over the letter and trace it?—Yes, but how would you proceed then?

Supposing you had a genuine letter and you wanted to copy a sentence from it, and supposing you were to put delicate tissue paper over it, you could trace it, at all events?—That is the way you would do it.

But how would you do it?—I think I should trust myself to copy it. Your way is much easier, certainly.

Why do you think that? Have you tried?—No; I have not tried. It is apparent that your way would be much easier.

A few minutes later the Commissioners adjourned for luncheon. When they came back Russell delivered his most crushing blow:

Yesterday you were good enough to write down certain words on a piece of paper, and among them was the word "hesitancy." Is that a word you are accustomed to use?—I have used it.

Did you notice that you spelt it as it is not ordinarily spelt?—Yes, I fancy I made a mistake in the spelling.

What was it?—I think it was an "a" instead of an "e," or vice versa; I am not sure which.

You cannot say what was the mistake, but you have a general consciousness that there was something wrong?—Yes.

I will tell you what was wrong according to the received spelling. You spelt it with an "e" instead of an "a." You spelt it thus—"h-e-s-i-t-e-n-c-y." That is not the received way of spelling it?—I believe not.

Have you noticed the fact that the writer of the body of the letter of the 9th of January, 1882—the alleged forged letter—spells it in the same way?—I heard that remark made long since, and my explanation of my misspelling is that having it in my mind I got into the habit of spelling it wrong.

Did your Lordships catch that last answer?

The President.—Oh, yes.

Russell asked a few more questions to get Pigott absolutely committed to his explanation that he had acquired his habit of misspelling "hesitancy" from the Parnell letter itself. Then he picked up another sheet and handed it to the witness:

You have already told me that that letter is yours?—Yes, that is right; that is my letter.

9/1/82 Dear 6. What are those follows washing for " The inaction is inexcusable our best men are in ferison and nothing is being done. Bompt retim is called for. your modelook to make it hot for old downto and loo. Let us have some bridence of your framer to do so. Thy Leath in Said Shanks yours on tail that & Painell OShea

PARNELL LETTER "No. 1"

# PIGOTT'S "HESITENCY" AND COLLAPSE

But you did not become possessed of this valuable letter, dated January 9, 1882, until the summer of 1886; and this letter is prior to that. The wrong spelling had not got into your head then?—No. I say that spelling is not my strong point.

Did you notice that in this letter you spell "hesitancy" in the same

way ?-No, I did not.

Having thus reduced his witness to a state approaching collapse, Russell reverted to less crucial considerations and spent the rest of the afternoon on further correspondence between Pigott and Forster, in which once more a strong suggestion of blackmail was revealed. As Pigott left the box, with his cross-examination still uncompleted, Parnell observed "That man will not come into the box again," and asked Lewis, his solicitor, to have him watched. Lewis answered: "It is little matter to us now, Mr. Parnell, whether he stays or goes."

In fact, when the Commission sat again three days later, on Tuesday, February 26, and Pigott's name was called, there was no reply. Soames's clerk gave evidence that a search had been made that morning at Pigott's hotel, and that he seemed to have disappeared. Thereupon the Commissioners, on Russell's application, caused a warrant to be issued for Pigott's arrest.

Remarkable events had been taking place out of Court during that week-end. On the Saturday, the day after his last appearance in the box, Pigott went to Labouchere's house and there offered to make a statement. Labouchere, in order to have a witness, called in Mr. George Augustus Sala, and in their presence Pigott made a full confession in writing that he had forged all the letters. This confession Labouchere sent to Lewis, but Parnell refused to have any dealings with Pigott, and the confession was accordingly returned to its author on Monday night by hand directed to him at Anderton's in Fleet Street.

But on the Saturday, after the meeting with Labouchere, Pigott sent for a Dublin solicitor named Shannon, who had been assisting Soames in the case. He called on Pigott at his Fleet Street hotel on Saturday and again on Sunday night, when he made a statement, which he sent to Shannon and confirmed by affidavit. In this statement Pigott gave a more complicated account of the affair. The confession to Labouchere, he said, had been made in the imminent fear of a prosecution for perjury, and under the influence of a promise that, provided he confessed to having forged all the letters, the prosecution should be stayed and a sum of £2,000 bestowed on his children. He now maintained that he had not, in fact, forged all the letters. Some he had obtained from a

man named Patrick Casey, and these he believed to be genuine. The remainder he and Casey had forged together. Thus on Monday night Shannon, acting for Soames, was in possession of an affidavit to this effect and Pigott forthwith disappeared to Paris. It was this affidavit that was produced in Court. The Attorney-General read it to the Commissioners on the day that Pigott's disappearance was discovered. The earlier document, which had on Monday been returned to Pigott, was posted by him from Paris to Soames's office. It was not received till the following day, when it was brought into Court unopened, and there, by direction of the Judges, opened and read by the Attorney-General. Perhaps because of this accident, perhaps because the account it gave was simpler and more sweeping, this version has gained popular acceptance. There are reasons, however, for supposing that Pigott's second thoughts were nearer to the truth than his first.

There can be no question that letter No. 1, that beginning "Dear E.—What are these fellows waiting for?" (see page 68) was forged by Pigott. If it were not included in both his confessions the damning word "hesitency" would alone be enough to convict him. But No. 2, the "facsimile letter" (see page 44), is in quite another category. Russell's cross-examination did not touch this letter at all, nor does it contain any internal evidence suggestive of forgery. Ouite apart from the illiteracies "hesitency" and "Your's," the whole phraseology of No. 1 is that of an uneducated man. No. 2 is written in ordinary educated English. It would be conceivable that both had been written by one man, who in the former case had either disguised his natural style or deliberately adapted it to suit the mental outlook of his correspondent. This, we must suppose, was the view taken in The Times office. It is possible that the two letters were the work of different forgers, or that one was genuine and one false. What is quite incredible is that they were both written by the same forger, impersonating in each case the same man.

But there is more than this. Sir Robert Anderson, who was appointed head of the Criminal Investigation Department, and, ex officio, an Assistant Commissioner of Police, in the very month that the Special Commission began its sittings, examined the originals of both letters minutely. He came to the conclusion that No. 2 was the model that the forger of No. 1 had used. If this conclusion be right, the necessary inference is that Pigott believed No. 2 to be genuine. A forger does not knowingly copy from another forgery if he has genuine documents in his posses-

## THE TIMES WITHDRAWS THE LETTERS

sion, as Pigott had been shown in Court to have. Moreover, letter No. 2, as we have indicated above, is, if a forgery, an extremely clever piece of work, probably far beyond the capacity of the bungling creature Pigott had been proved by Russell to be.

This is not to say that letter No. 2 was really written by Parnell. Anderson believed to the last that the actual signature was genuine, being perhaps an autograph given by Parnell on a blank sheet of paper folded so as to bring the signature on the fourth page. He held that if the letter itself was forged the forgery was done, not by Pigott or Casey, but by a man named O'Keefe, who had been imprisoned at Kilmainham with Parnell and had been occasionally employed by his leader as amanuensis. On this hypothesis the forgery was committed in the interests, not of The Times or the Unionist Party, but of the extremists of the Irish movement. Its object was to commit Parnell farther than he himself was willing to go and really to answer the malcontents to whose protests it alludes. An attractive feature of this theory is that it accounts for the curious point of the erasure. The forger found that he had attributed to Parnell a stronger phrase than, on second thoughts, could be expected to carry conviction, but, having only one genuine signature to use, could not begin his forgery afresh.

Here the question of the authorship of the letters must be left. Letter No. 1 was certainly forged, letter No. 2 almost certainly, but by whom and why and when are problems that were not solved with any certainty by the Commission and that time has rendered insoluble.

The Times, of course, had no alternative but to withdraw the letters unconditionally. This was done on their behalf by the Attorney-General at the conclusion of the reading of Pigott's affidavit. "My Lords," he said,

under these circumstances it seems to us that the course which we ought to take is clearly defined; and, believing that we are merely doing our duty, I now, on behalf of those whom we represent, ask permission to withdraw from your consideration the question of the genuineness of the letters which have been submitted to you, the authenticity of which is denied, with the full acknowledgment that, after the evidence which has been given, we are not entitled to say that they are genuine. My Lords, although it is possible that any expression of regret used by me in making this statement may be misinterpreted, those whom I represent request me to express their sincere regret that these letters were published. That feeling, which most truly exists, will at the proper time be more fully expressed by themselves.

In the following day's leading article the statement from which these words are taken was reproduced in full. The article went

on to amplify it by accepting without question Parnell's declaration in the witness-box that the letters attributed to him were forgeries, and to make the same admission of all the other incriminating letters put in. But at the same time it was careful to point out that *The Times* had not obtained the letters from Pigott himself, and that if, as Russell had alleged, there had been "a foul conspiracy," the paper had been no party to it. Finally, the point was reasserted that the case against the Irish members was by no means confined to the charge concerning the letters, and that on the general thesis of "Parnellism and Crime" *The Times* stood to its guns. The article ends:

This withdrawal of course refers exclusively to the letters obtained from Pigott and not to the other portion of the case embraced in the "charges and allegations," which still remain the subject of judicial inquiry. Our desire is simply to express deep regret for the error into which we were led, and to withdraw unreservedly those parts of our original statements which we cannot honestly continue to maintain.

This article appeared on February 28. The following day the emissaries of Sir Robert Anderson succeeded in tracing Pigott to a hotel in Madrid, but he committed suicide by shooting himself with a revolver at the moment of arrest.

The reservations in the editorial comment on the Pigott débâcle were by no means unnecessary. The Irish party naturally burst into unrestrained jubilation, and a popular impression was rapidly created that the whole case, for practical purposes, was as good as closed in favour of Parnell. He was cheered in the streets whenever he appeared in public, he was elected an honorary life member of the National Liberal Club and received the freedom of the City of Edinburgh, and on his first appearance in the House of Commons after the exposure of Pigott the whole Liberal Party rose in their places to salute him.

At Printing House Square there was corresponding consternation, and a feeling that perhaps the preservation of the ship required the self-immolation of its principal officers. On March 1, the day when the news of Pigott's suicide was received, Buckle wrote the following letter to MacDonald:

Strictly confidential.

Printing House Square, 1 March 1889.

My dear MacDonald,

As you broached the subject of possible resignation to me to-night, I will tell you the course I have been gradually making up my mind to during this past week of trial. I had not meant to say anything to you about it, believing it to be best that we should act each according as his own judgment should dictate.

My intention is to write before long to Mr Walter, stating that, as I fully recognize the gravity of the blunder for which I am one of the

## WALTER REJECTS THE EDITOR'S RESIGNATION

persons responsible & the blow which it has given to the reputation of the Paper, I desire to place myself entirely in his hands, in case he shd think it advisable, in the interests of the Paper, to have a change of editor; but that I presume, in any case, he would prefer that I should continue at my post till the Special Commission was at an end.

Pray keep this entirely to yourself, as I am taking nobody but my most immediate relations, such as wife & father, into my confidence.

It is perfectly monstrous to endeavour to saddle you with a responsibility which so many of us share. I am quite ready to fight on, but can't help seeing that public confidence may be sooner restored if there be an ostentatious change of editor.

Meanwhile let us cheer up and do our best.

Yours always,
G. E. Buckle.

Buckle's offer of resignation was sent in on March 10, and was immediately declined by Walter, who, indeed, to the day of his death, continued to believe in the authenticity of at least the letter No. 2. "While," he wrote,

I fully recognize the honourable and unselfish feeling which prompted your letter of yesterday, I cannot for a moment entertain the proposal conveyed in it, or allow you to imagine that the untoward events of the last fortnight have in any way shaken my confidence in your fitness to retain the office you have hitherto filled with so much credit to yourself and to the paper.

Walter's view being of this decisive character, both Editor and Manager remained at their posts.

The Times continued through its counsel to fight the general issue before the Commission. James's biographer, Lord Askwith, who himself held a brief for The Times before the Commission. writes truly that James's view, which he constantly maintained before the Judges and which formed the theme of his final speech, was that "the indictment of The Times was a history of the causes which have perturbed Ireland, and that in that history the alleged letters were but an incident, seized upon by the defendants as the only libel, but in fact not alien to other acts done or words said by some of them. Those other words and acts constituted the real basis of the accusations, and were as bad as The Times said they were." On March 13, 1889, it was announced that The Times counsel had completed their case. Thereupon Russell applied for an adjournment to enable counsel for the defence to collate the evidence that had been submitted, and his case was accordingly not opened until April 2.

He began with one of the greatest speeches of his oratorical career, and incidentally one of the longest. It lasted into the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> G. R. Askwith, Lord James of Hereford (London, 1930), p. 206.

eighth day. Even by Irish standards it was a highly antiquarian performance. We are told in the official biography by Mr. Barry O'Brien, who was devilling the case for him at the time, that Russell well knew that on the main issues of fact the allegations of *The Times* were accurate enough. The campaign of the Land League could not be called anything but lawless, and, though the direct connexion of any of the accused members with specific outrages might not be capable of proof, it could not be denied that "the Parnellite party lived, moved, and had its being in an atmosphere of treason and lawlessness."

In this situation Russell chose the strategy of counter-attack. Admitting the terrorism of the Land League, he sought to prove that this was nothing new in Ireland, but the continuation, even the milder continuation, of a state of affairs that had been endemic in the country for more than a century. The root cause of it all, dating back to 1761, was English oppression, and the fomenter of discord between the two peoples through several generations had been *The Times*.

It is worthy of note that, in the course of his great oration, Russell did not omit to flog the dead horse of the Pigott letters, which *The Times* had already withdrawn. But, although he examined a few of them in some detail, advancing theories concerning the manner of their adaptation from genuine specimens in Pigott's possession, he left the "facsimile letter" out of account, save for a passing reference to "the words smacking of transpontine melodrama—'Let not my address be known."

The first witness called for the defence was Parnell himself. His evidence lasted for six days, during which his whole career was brought under examination and his political creed expounded. On the whole, Parnell stood up well to the Attorney-General's cross-examination. He failed, however, to make what would have been the strongest vindication of the Land League by producing evidence that its large income had been wholly expended upon lawful objects. Patrick Egan, the treasurer, was a fugitive from justice, and in his absence Parnell was not able to say where the account books of the League could be found. Webster pressed him at some length on this point, extracted the admission that the accounts, at least for a considerable period, had not been audited. and succeeded in conveying the impression of a marked reluctance on the part of the Irish leaders to allow the light of publicity to play upon the financial transactions of the League. After Parnell came a long succession of witnesses for the defence, whose

<sup>1</sup> R. Barry O'Brien, Life and Letters of Lord Russell of Killowen (London, 1901), p. 222.

evidence was found by the general public no less tedious than that called by *The Times*. The general tenor of their contention was that the crimes in Ireland were the outcome of agrarian distress and not of incitement by the accused politicians. How far they were successful in proving this thesis will be seen when we come to consider the Commissioners' report.

There came a day when Russell recalled Houston to the box to cross-examine him on his financial dealing with Pigott. His object was to show that there had been a "foul conspiracy," to which the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union was a party, to manufacture a case against the Nationalist leaders. Houston, as we have seen, asserted, and still asserts, that his investigations had been undertaken as a personal mission, and that the Union had neither knowledge of, nor responsibility for, his actions. In particular, he denied the suggestion that the money that had been advanced by Maguire (who had died on the day of Pigott's exposure) for the purchase of the letters had in reality been supplied from the funds of the Union. 1 Houston was willing to submit the books of the Union to the inspection of the Judges in support of his denial. But Russell and his colleagues and clients were the leading Parliamentary opponents of the Unionist cause, and Houston strongly objected to disclosing all the financial transactions of the Union to such men as these. The Commissioners held that their task was to examine into the truth of the charges brought by The Times and not into the manner in which their evidence had been collected; they therefore refused to order the production of the books. Thereupon Russell and Asquith, acting on previous instructions received from Parnell, threw up their briefs and left the Court. After Pigott's breakdown and Russell's great political speech they doubtless felt that the rest of their case was bound to be an anti-climax, and were glad of an excuse to break it off at that point. For the retort that the undoubtedly relevant books of the Land League, in the keeping of the fugitive treasurer Egan, were also not before the Commission would appear to be a sufficient answer to the pretext on which they withdrew.

Lockwood and the counsel representing the other accused persons followed Russell out, and, save for Davitt, who was conducting his own defence with great ability, *The Times* counsel were henceforth left alone to cross-examine witnesses who gave no evidence-in-chief. The President of the Court laconically commented on the demonstration that "the position of things is in no way altered, except that . . . we have the misfortune to be no longer assisted by the counsel who have appeared before us."

<sup>1</sup> See p. 64.

The closing stages of the trial were remarkable for two great efforts of oratory. The first was a brilliant tour de force, lasting four days, by Michael Davitt in his own defence. In a detailed apologia pro vita sua he told the story of his own career from a childhood spent in poverty and squalor to an unchallengeable supremacy among the leaders of Irish extra-Parliamentary agitation. He followed the traditional line of Irish rhetoric and endeavoured to take the whole case out of the region of law into that of high politics. Naturally, he put the case against The Times with more fervent invective than the professional advocates had allowed themselves:

The history of this Commission . . . will exhibit those men sitting in the editorial rooms of Printing House Square with professions of loyalty on their lips and poison in their pens; with "honesty" proclaimed in the articles which salaried falsehood has written; with simulated regard to truth making "shame ashamed" of their concocted fabrications. And these men, with the salaries of the rich in their pockets and the smiles of London society as their rewards, have been carrying on a deliberately planned system of infamous allegation against political opponents who have been but striving to redeem the sad misfortunes of their country, in efforts to bring to an end a strife of centuries' duration between neighbouring nations. Between The Times on the one hand, and the accused on the other, your Lordships, however, are first to judge.

Davitt's speech made a deep impression on the audience, and there was applause in Court at its conclusion. The President himself complimented the orator:

Mr Davitt, your expression of regret for a want of legal skill was not necessary. You have put your arguments with great force and ability, and we are obliged to you for having given us assistance which has been withheld from us by others.

Sir Henry James then rose to reply on behalf of *The Times*. He spoke for twelve days, reviewing and coordinating the whole of the evidence that had been produced by both sides. He attempted no such flights of oratory as Russell and Davitt; his task was to bring back the attention of the Court from matters of policy to matters of fact. But he began with a vehement repudiation of Russell's charge that *The Times* had been the consistent enemy of the Irish people. On the contrary, he was able to cite a long list of critical occasions in Irish history when the paper had used its full strength in support of the Irish popular cause, often at the risk of alienating dominant opinion in England. It had helped to secure the abrogation of the penal laws, and afterwards the emancipation of the Catholics. It had argued for the endowment of Maynooth

## SUMMING UP THE CASE FOR THE TIMES

and for the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869. It had taken a leading part in the relief of distress during the famine of 1846, and as early as 1850 was to be found arguing for an extension of the Irish franchise. As for the land question, he quoted an article of 1847:

We have risked the good will of the whole English aristocracy by the zeal and perseverance with which we urged the duties of property. We laboured that the absentee should be a byword and a reproach, a very outcast from English society. We risked our credit for truth by retailing with strong comments Irish narratives of ejectments and clearance, extermination and death.

The Times had supported the Land Act of 1870 and the later Act of 1881, which Russell himself had called "that great charter of the Irish tenants." With this record of past good will towards Ireland he was entitled to claim for *The Times* that

it is not on behalf of a class and a paramount class, but on behalf of the whole Irish nation, on behalf of those who have most need of protection, that it has struck home, and admittedly struck hard, against those who ... have been supporting the assassin and attacking the victim.

On the question of the forged letters, now withdrawn, James was precluded from saying anything in explanation of the conduct of *The Times* because the libel action that had been brought by Parnell against the paper in a Scottish Court was at the time *sub judice*. But he vindicated the *bona fides* of *The Times*, which, indeed, scarcely needed vindication, for Russell himself had admitted it in words that James quoted:

I have to say, and have said, many hard things of *The Times*. I am not going to suggest that they believed that these were forged when they put them forward.

James wound up his case on November 22, 1889. At the conclusion of his speech the proceedings of the Special Commission, which had sat on 129 days, were brought to an end. On February 13, 1890, the Judges presented their report to the Queen. It fills some seventy quarto pages, in small type, each the equivalent of a column of *The Times*. But its conclusions were summarized as follows:

I. We find that the respondent members of Parliament collectively were not members of a conspiracy having for its object to establish the absolute independence of Ireland, but we find that some of them, together with Mr. Davitt, established and joined in the Land League organization with the intention by its means to bring about the absolute independence of Ireland as a separate nation. The names of those respondents are set out on a previous page.

II. We find that the respondents did enter into a conspiracy by a system of coercion and intimidation to promote an agrarian agitation against the payment of agricultural rents, for the purpose of impoverishing and expelling from the country the Irish landlords who were styled the "English Garrison."

On the "facsimile letter" the report was no less explicit:

III. We find that the charge that "when on certain occasions they thought it politic to denounce, and did denounce, certain crimes in public they afterwards led their supporters to believe such denunciations were not sincere" is not established. We entirely acquit Mr. Parnell and the other respondents of the charge of insincerity in their denunciation of the Phoenix Park murders, and find that the "facsimile" letter on which this charge was chiefly based as against Mr. Parnell is a forgery.

For the rest, the Judges reported that:

- IV. We find that the respondents did disseminate the *Irish World* and other newspapers tending to incite sedition and the commission of other crime.
- V. We find that the respondents did not directly incite persons to the commission of crime other than intimidation, but that they did incite to intimidation, and that the consequence of that incitement was that crime and outrage were committed by the persons incited. We find that it has not been proved that the respondents made payments for the purpose of inciting persons to commit crime.
- VI. We find as to the allegation that the respondents did nothing to prevent crime and expressed no bona fide disapproval, that some of the respondents, and in particular Mr Davitt, did express bona fide disapproval of crime and outrage, but that the respondents did not denounce the system of intimidation which led to crime and outrage, but persisted in it with knowledge of its effect.
- VII. We find that the respondents did defend persons charged with agrarian crime, and supported their families, but that it has not been proved that they subscribed to testimonials for, or were intimately associated with, notorious criminals, or that they made payments to procure the escape of criminals from justice.
- VIII. We find, as to the allegation that the respondents made payments to compensate persons who had been injured in the commission of crime, that they did make such payments.
- IX. As to the allegation that the respondents invited the assistance and cooperation of and accepted subscriptions of money from known advocates of crime and the use of dynamite, we find that the respondents did invite the assistance and cooperation of and accepted subscriptions of money from Patrick Ford, a known advocate of crime and the use of dynamite, but that it has not been proved that the respondents or any

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of them knew that the Clan-na-Gael controlled the League or was collecting money for the Parliamentary Fund. It has been proved that the respondents invited and obtained the assistance and cooperation of the Physical Force Party in America, including the Clan-na-Gael, and in order to obtain that assistance abstained from repudiating or condemning the action of that party.

Finally, regarding the remaining three specific charges against Parnell, the Judges reported:

(a) "That at the time of the Kilmainham negotiations Mr. Parnell knew that Sheridan and Boyton had been organizing outrage, and therefore wished to use them to put down outrage."

We find that this charge has not been proved.

(b) "That Mr. Parnell was intimate with the leading Invincibles, that he probably learned from them what they were about when he was released on parole in April, 1882, and that he recognized the Phoenix Park murders as their handiwork."

We find that there is no foundation for this charge.

We have already stated that the Invincibles were not a branch of the Land League.

(c) "That Mr. Parnell on 23rd January, 1883, by an opportune remittance enabled F. Byrne to escape from justice to France."

We find that Mr. Parnell did not make any remittance to enable F. Byrne to escape from justice.

The Judges dealt also with two special charges against Mr. Davitt, and showed in the course of their report that:

Mr. Davitt was a member of the Fenian organization, and convicted as such, and that he received money from a fund which had been contributed for the purpose of outrage and crime—viz., the Skirmishing Fund. It was not, however, for the formation of the Land League itself, but for the promotion of the agitation which led up to it. We have also shown that Mr. Davitt returned the money out of his own resources.

With regard to the further allegation that he was in close and intimate association with the party of violence in America, and mainly instrumental in bringing about the alliance between that party and the Parnellite and Home Rule party in America, we find that he was in such close and intimate association for the purpose of bringing about, and that he was mainly instrumental in bringing about, the alliance referred to.

The effect of these findings, showing that some charges were proved, some "not proven," and some disproved, was naturally to throw the whole controversy back into the arena of party politics—which it had never really left—and to provide abundant ammunition for both sides. The Home Rule Liberals, keeping the forged letters always in the forefront of their case, and interpreting every statement that a charge was not established as a proof that it was false, argued that the result was a virtual acquittal on all counts. Unionists with equal vehemence and more reason pointed out that under findings 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 a definite association

#### PARNELLISM AND CRIME

was established between Parnellism and agrarian crime; that under finding 9 an equally definite association was established with the American advocates of dynamite outrage; and that, as the Land League books and bank accounts were not produced and Egan (its treasurer) and Sheridan (one of its principal organizers) did not go into the witness-box, the verdict "not proven" on certain charges was obviously very different from "not guilty." The clash of these opinions embittered the Parliamentary debates of the spring of 1890. But the Government succeeded in its motion to get the Report entered in its journals and to thank the Judges. *The Times* itself, while fully and frankly admitting that many of its charges had failed, did not hesitate to claim the report on the whole as a substantial vindication:

The points which the Judges consider to be established . . . cover the greater part of the ground of Parnellism and Crime. So much pains have been spent by the Gladstonians during the last three years in throwing dust in the eyes of the country that there is still a good deal of confusion as to the effect and bearing of our charges and allegations against Mr. Parnell and his followers. We did not accuse these men of personal participation in crime. If we had done so our contention would have been, not that their alliance should be disowned, but that they should stand in the dock and be tried under the criminal law. What we did say, and what we now repeat with more emphasis than ever, is that they were in no true sense a political party, representing the free movement of public opinion, but a parasitic growth, like those plants which, seemingly possessing an independent existence, live on the roots of trees, drawing sustenance and strength from an organization originating among the alien enemies of England, based upon terrorism. operating through outrage, and so deeply implicated with criminality that it was not within the power, even if it were the desire, of the nominal leaders to place any effectual check upon crime (February 14, 1890).

The long controversy had had catastrophic effects on the internal economy of Printing House Square and on some of the principal personalities there. The disasters of the time fell most hardly on MacDonald. He had borne the principal responsibility, both in open Court and behind the scenes, and the strain proved too much for his constitution. He fell ill in July, and though after a prolonged holiday he returned to work in the autumn, he never fully recovered. His few letters towards the end of the year are full of despondency and foreboding for the future of the paper, and he did not live to read the Commission's report. On December 10, 1889, he died.

There were other losses that could not be assessed in money. Throughout the long-drawn proceedings the Editor had felt it to be his duty to reproduce verbally the whole of the evidence given day by day before the Commission. When this had to be added to

## THE TIMES AND THE £200,000 COST

a largely verbatim report of Parliament the pressure on space became overwhelming and resulted in a distressing impoverishment of the general contents of the paper. At a time when competition with cheaper newspapers was becoming more severe, it was inevitable that *The Times* should lose much ground.

A considerable, if temporary, loss of prestige must also be admitted. The mid-Victorian legend of the inerrancy of *The Times* was exploded. Something of the awe of holy writ, which from the days of Barnes had clung about its columns, now faded away. *The Times* had been deceived by Pigott and might be deceived again.

The first task that lay before the controlling authorities of The Times was to count the cost, which was terrifying. Least important was Parnell's libel action in Scotland, which was successfully compromised, after the withdrawal of the letters, by a payment of £5,000. But the proceedings before the Commissionwhich, as MacDonald wrote, had far surpassed the voracity of Pharaoh's lean kine—had proved vastly more expensive. From first to last they cost The Times over £200,000. It was felt in many quarters that it was not just that a private partnership should be left to bear the costs of what was virtually a State prosecution under Act of Parliament. Accordingly offers of financial assistance and suggestions for raising a public subscription, poured into Printing House Square from old readers and friends of the paper. A minor proprietor, Mr. G. F. Chambers, urged the advisability of the Chief Proprietor's acceptance of the offer to organize a public subscription. But John Walter III was resolute that The Times should bear its own burden, though he was characteristically generous in his personal contribution to the total. The resources of the paper were crippled for many years to come. Indeed, the whole energy of Moberly Bell, MacDonald's successor as Manager, was destined to be spent in an uphill and, as it at last proved, unsuccessful fight to retrieve the losses incurred without radically changing the constitution of the paper. Lacking reserves, without capital, The Times in 1890 found itself face to face with strong competition from a host of rivals, old and new.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mr. Chambers was among the small proprietors of *The Times* who in 1907-1908 agitated against the alleged "dictation" of Arthur Fraser Walter. See Chapter XIV: "The Times in Adversity and Litigation."

# IV

### THE PRESS AND THE PARTIES

THE last decade of Walter's proprietorship and the disaster of the Parnell commission coincided with developments in the newspaper trade which were to exert upon the Press as a whole, and upon The Times, an influence more profound even than that of the abolition of the stamp in 1855. Many of the journals founded immediately after the removal of the tax sought a new public and encouraged a popular style of writing that was new. Their older contemporaries, following the lead of Matthew Arnold, derisively and loosely called it a "New" Journalism. Rather, it was merely the preface to it. All that was vouchsafed to him to see was Stead's development of Greenwood's St. James's Gazette. An editor who said he would rather run naked down the Strand than that his Pall Mall should be ignored was bound to produce a Gazette with a "difference." The Victorians were right then in noting the "difference" between journalism as practised in the majority of the morning papers, particularly The Times, and that in the new evening papers, particularly the Pall Mall Gazette. But this "difference," slight as it was in the eves of the next generation of newspaper readers, was a truly material one in the view of eminent Victorians. They attacked it the more earnestly since they feared that the morning papers would follow the new "evening" tendency. When the last of the "taxes on knowledge" was repealed in 1861 Gladstone said that for its full effects "men must wait until we of the nineteenth century are no more." Immense changes took place before Gladstone's death four years after Walter's own in 1894.

But *The Times*, under the third John Walter, was the least likely to change. In 1890, as in 1860, the Chief Proprietor's determination was firmly fixed. John Walter III's theory of the presentation of news was, like himself, solid and strict. He believed that the entire body of readers of *The Times* knew that, whether or not the paper was a pleasure to read, it was at once their indispensable need and paramount duty to digest, word by word, its solidly printed news and comment. Hence there was

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. II, Chapter XIV.

little point in varying the setting of the text or enlarging the type of the headlines. Even for an item of sensational and authentic news only a slight increase in the size of the headline was tolerable—the size and style of type designed for conventional events must be retained for sensational text. On the repeal of the paper tax, Walter had reduced the price of the paper to threepence. Other reduction there was none.1

There was the less chance of the morning Press as a whole being affected so long as The Times continued by its prestige to dominate the whole of it. The Daily Telegraph, which in its early days departed from the example of The Times in favour of certain practices of the New York Herald, reverted to type as it became an established property. It came to enjoy the faithful support of the ambitious and extensive petite bourgeoisie, and it turned Unionist after Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule. The style of The Times was followed equally by the Morning Post, then edited by William Hardman for Algernon Borthwick. It was Conservative once more in the 1880's, after a landed-Whig interval, and was the preferred paper of the aristocracy, by whose classified advertisements for properties and servants it greatly prospered. The Conservative Party Standard, for which W. H. Mudford was responsible with J. C. Johnstone as an absentee proprietor, also followed the style of The Times. The Daily News, Gladstonian even before Mr. G. had been recognized as a national leader, became the property in 1890 of Messrs. Oppenheim, Labouchere and Arnold Morley; it was lively in tone but in looks as solid and as deliberate as The Times. The Daily Chronicle (formerly the local Clerkenwell News) was a Liberal-Unionist paper adapted to the intelligence of the small shopkeeper; it alone was looser in make-up than the others.

Thus Buckle and the rest of political London read a morning Press which consisted, apart from *The Times*, of three Liberal and three Conservative journals, all very similar in make-up. There were, however, differences in literary style. Notably, the *Daily Telegraph* encouraged a certain amount of light topical writing from George Augustus Sala and "feature" writing by Beatty and Kingston, and with apt leader-writing by Sir Edwin Arnold and others customarily referred to in the eighties, as in the seventies, as the "young lions" of Peterborough Court. The *Morning Post* had the services of Andrew Lang before he went over to the *Daily News*. All, however, maintained, even at a penny, the dignity in the presentation of the news characteristic of the old, pre-repeal,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Vol. II, Chapter XVII.

high-priced Press led by *The Times*. It would, therefore, be difficult to make any serious breach in this morning phalanx. Any novel journalistic methods would make their first appearance, if at all, in the evening Press.

There were, however, long-standing habits of thought and practice in this field also. For twenty years at least certain conventions had been followed in a section of the upper-middle class journals. The Globe was a Conservative paper founded in 1803. The Pall Mall Gazette, as originally published in 1865 at twopence, was slighter in size; and, as it was conceived as an evening "review," it was more openly, though scarcely less primly, set than the morning Press. It was, however, from the beginning, lighter in writing. The Pall Mall later set itself another ambition. It was transformed on January 1, 1870, into a full-sized morning paper of twelve handsomely set pages in large type. The object, Leslie Stephen, one of its principal writers. informed Oliver Wendell Holmes, was "to fight The Times and endeavour to supply a cultivated British audience with first-class literature and high principles at the low rate of twopence." The endeavour to undercut The Times by a penny failed and the Pall Mall Gazette, after 1870, returned to evening publication in its original form and so continued. In 1880 the Editor was still Frederick Greenwood. In politics he had not varied. They were, he said, "Philosophic Radical," but readers might equally well believe they were either Sceptical Tory or Devout Jingo. Everybody, however, knew they had always been fervently anti-Gladstonian, which was what really mattered. The Editor of the Pall Mall Gazette had always been above taking notice of other people's profits and losses. George Smith, his proprietor, had lost £25,000 for the good of Greenwood's cause when, in the General Election of 1880, the Liberals were returned and Smith saw vanish his chances of making the Conservative Pall Mall Gazette pay. He seized the opportunity to turn over the losing paper as a wedding present to a rich son-in-law, Henry Yates Thompson.

As the new proprietor was an orthodox Liberal there followed a reversal, and not the last, of the Pall Mall's politics. John Morley, an ardent Gladstonian, was put into Greenwood's chair, while the extruded Editor proceeded with the establishment of a new "Gazette" with funds supplied by H. H. Gibbs (afterwards Lord Aldenham). The pro-Beaconsfield and pro-Salisbury St. James's Gazette was addressed to the same "cultivated British audience" as the Pall Mall, and, equally, lost money. In 1882 Morley, dispirited, began to think of leaving. There was,

however, an expedient which might be tried: that of trying to extend the Pall Mall's circulation by reducing the price from 2d. to 1d. The price was reduced. As the St. James's followed suit, and competition between the two became more acute, both found that by reducing their price they had increased their losses. Moreover, the Evening Standard and the Globe were already both at a penny. The Echo and the new foundation, the Evening News, both sold at one halfpenny to a very different audience, did not need to be considered; but it could hardly be hoped in 1882 that there was room for four "cultivated" evening journals appealing to the one "cultivated" class. There must soon be a struggle, ending, to borrow a text from the bible of the cultured agnostics who ran the Pall Mall Gazette, with the "survival of the fittest." In 1883, Morley, foreseeing unwelcome changes, resigned; William Thomas Stead, his energetic and Christian assistant, was appointed Editor. The new Editor, with Alfred Milner to assist, realized that, if his paper was to survive, a fit, i.e., a revolutionary, programme was needed. He had already brought into regular use the new crosshead and other new aids to quick reading. Much more novelty was required and Stead introduced the "interview" despite protests against his invasion of personal privacy; he conducted social and political campaigns; drew national attention despite criticism of his "sensationalism"; checked the commercialization of vice and the exploitation of the poor despite the allegation of muckraking; campaigned on behalf of General Gordon, ignoring the taunt of jingoism; and secured news scoops again and again. It was a type of journalism which the older Victorians feared might infect even the morning Press.

Stead's journalism was, in fact, done with great courage and great rectitude, if with unaccustomed violence of language. Many contemporary journalists and readers who had forgotten Barnes found a "new" and intolerable nuisance in what a previous generation would have regarded as normal "thundering." Nevertheless, Stead's newspaper, whatever its faults, was found stimulating and readable even by many of the cultivated. Certainly his policy and programme were admirable evening journalism. Behind his social campaign there was social conviction. Stead was no aloof agnostic essayist. Moreover, although he was keen to take a responsible and definite stand on political and social issues, he never forgot that he was the editor of a newspaper which was not his own property and he exerted himself to see that the Pall Mall was a commercial, as well as a journalistic, success. But, unfortunately, Stead did not know how to combine business with journalism. Lively as it was, the

Pall Mall did not yield results that satisfied the proprietor. The paper had changed its editor, its traditions, its typography. It had introduced interviews, pictures, scoops and stunts and sensationalism, but for all of it Stead did not manage to satisfy Yates Thompson. The New Journalism was a vain invention so far as the Pall Mall was concerned. Finally Stead overreached himself by "proving" the innocence of one Lipski, who was indicted for murder, a few hours before his confession was circulated by the agencies. After six notable years the Editor chose to vacate the chair. The lesson of the episode, not then drawn, was that the Newest Journalism had failed because it had been tried on the wrong paper. Stead should have been editor of a newspaper with a popular price, policy and party. When, in 1889, a dispute arose between Stead and his assistant E. T. Cook, Thompson supported the latter and the older journalistic tradition which he sponsored.1

The Newest Journalism, in consequence, hardly affected the morning Press, except typographically. *The Times*, in spite of the *Pall Mall's* "impertinence" (the word was Buckle's), would wait to adopt the crosshead until the arrival of Moberly Bell in 1890. But if the morning Press as a whole was not eager to learn from Stead, there were at work in other branches of the publishing trade men and influences more favourable to the development of popular journalism than Walter and Buckle, Borthwick and Hardman, or Johnstone and Mudford.

Stead, when leaving the Pall Mall, was already secure of the support of another Liberal, a man still young, but experienced in the Manchester retail stationery trade. He had later proved himself a publisher possessed of highly original ideas. Thus George Newnes was a man of money when Stead met him. His first invention, brought out in 1881, was a weekly: Tit-Bits from All the Most Interesting Books, Periodicals and Newspapers of the World, consisting of sixteen large quarto pages, in three columns, price one penny in a green wrapper covered with advertisements. In order to maintain the greatest possible variety all the constituent articles, stories, items, paragraphs and sentences were short. No space was given to politics; but while the mass of Tit-Bits consisted of scissors and paste, original contributions from readers were invited. Among those who submitted articles was a contributor of 17 years of age: Alfred Charles William Harmsworth. With its cuttings and brief original articles this budget of bright, short items in simple and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Yates Thompson appointed Cook editor of the Pall Mall from January 1, 1890. He sold the Gazette over his head in 1892. See infra.

#### NEWNES AND TIT-BITS

direct English, sold at the price of a copper, fell exactly within the intellectual and financial reach of a generation new to reading. The success of the enterprise was stupendous. Prize competitions sent up the circulation by leaps and bounds. Newnes saw that he must remove his headquarters from Manchester to London.

On his arrival he looked about for new men with new ideas in whom to invest his profits. Newnes's father was a Congregational minister and, like him, a Liberal. Stead was also the son of a Congregational minister. As Liberals they met again after schooldays at Silcoates. Stead advanced three suggestions for new periodicals. There being no politics in Tit-Bits, it seemed an excellent idea to fashion a weekly compendium ("digest" they would now call it) of the world's serious Press for the convenience of another audience, one politically mature. weeks later the result of Newnes's and Stead's collaboration appeared. It was the Review of Reviews, first published in 1890. Its prosperity was assured and Stead's belief in sensationalism reassured. Newnes, however, soon objected to it and they parted company. Newnes started the Strand Magazine with Greenhough Smith as editor. Stead remained and progressed with the Review and was then lost to daily journalism, or rather successful daily journalism, for, years later he was destined to try his hand at a morning paper-short-lived as it turned out.

A vast amount of money was lost in these years. The root cause of the unprosperous Pall Mall's troubles lay less in its politics and in its editors than in its trade situation. Stead could have rendered prosperous another sort of paper, but the Pall Mall was designed as a "class paper," its audience remained, in Leslie Stephen's word, "cultivated"; in hard journalistic fact it was an audience that was narrow or at least small. Under Harry Cust the paper returned to its Conservative traditions, but not even Cust's brilliance could produce dividends. The newspapers as a whole were at this time dominated by the "cultivated" tone even when they were addressed to what was now being recognized as "the million." Proprietors might know the economic value of the biggest possible reading audience; advertisers might understand the significance of mass "readership," but journalists did not yet know how to write for "the million." A new generation of writers needed to be trained. The Tit-Bits success was destined to modify, in the most profound degree, the intellectual, social and political tone of the Press as a whole. Ultimately, like Tit-Bits, the daily Press would be dominated by the tone of "the million." The process took some twenty years.

But the huge sales of *Tit-Bits* already dwarfed the circulation, hitherto thought vast, of the *Daily Telegraph*. Newnes offered the advertiser a far more powerful aid to sales than any daily then gave. Only the exceptions, the publishers of books and the manufacturers of commodities whose sale was limited by their price to the "cultivated" classes, would consider buying space in the *Pall Mall* or the *St. James's*. That was the real trouble with the "cultured" Press. It could not support itself.

It was never appreciated by editors and writers, like Greenwood. Morley, Cook and Spender, that writing, however serious, apt or brilliant, cannot by itself make any newspaper pay. Nor, it must be admitted, did any contemporary newspaper proprietor recognize, as the first and second Walter had done generations before, that the morning and evening Press were branches of the publishing trade which, like any other, must be made to pay in order to continue in business. Rather, it seemed to the mid-Victorians that the abolition of the "taxes on knowledge" somehow automatically conferred immunity from financial loss. It was not realized that the Pall Mall or the St. James's was designed, edited, written and published for a class which did not exist in sufficient numbers to make it pay. Even Stead, who alone of editors of this class of paper endeavoured to grasp the problem of journalism as a whole, thought that evening papers published in the interest of that small class could be made to pay by a combination of the right policy and the right editor and the right price.

The profitable production of a paper for a more numerous class was by no means free from difficulty. In the year before Stead's resignation from the Pall Mall a brilliant new recruit to evening journalism made his début. On January 17, 1888, T. P. O'Connor, who had interested a syndicate of Liberals in a project to popularize democracy rather than politics, brought out No. 1 of the Star. The Editor had been in the foreign room of the Daily Telegraph and been employed in the London office of the New York Herald. He was now determined to show London something new as well as something demo-Explicitly repudiating what he called "obsolete" journalism, O'Connor promised an evening journal that should be "animated, readable and stirring." The promise was made good by the use of headlines in a size and variety never before seen this side of the Atlantic and by being "the earliest in the field" with the news. The style of writing in the Star was to be clear and "unmistakable in meaning." The Editor's statement printed on the front page also announced that " we shall find no place for the verbose and prolix articles to which most of our

#### THE HALFPENNY STAR

contemporaries still adhere. We shall have daily but one article of any length, and it will usually be confined within half a column. The other items of the day will be dealt with in notes terse, pointed, and plain-spoken."

The price of the Star, like that of the Echo and the Evening News, was one halfpenny. Evening readers of all kinds and classes appreciated the writing and sound criticism and the freshness of H. W. Massingham, Bernard Shaw and A. B. Walkley, who wrote for the Star; but it was the attention and the space given in response to the demand for news in bright, above all short, paragraphs on the part of the new young public that really mattered to its sales. This, in fact, was the audience and the demand that was to determine the course which journalism was to take during that generation and the next.

The journalists, the critical writers, the managers and the capitalists, above all, those whoever they were, would win who realized that the newspaper-reading public was recruited from below. The principle was implicit in Charles Knight's *Penny Magazine* of 1834, and in other publications of the kind, and in the campaign against the "taxes on knowledge" which, when successful, broke the numerical superiority of *The Times*. What the Liberal supporters of this measure did not foresee was that a cheap Press would necessarily create a popular style of journalism. Even so, the old journalistic conventions obtained for almost a generation. The turn came with *Tit-Bits*; the change became explicit in evening journalism in 1888 with the *Star*.

This fundamental change in daily, albeit evening, journalism could not have been realized until the Elementary Education Act of 1870 had, eighteen years after its passing into law, created the new reading public. The new generation of journalists who ministered to this new public were to create a force much more significant than the New Journalism that Arnold deplored twenty years before. But the opportunity had not yet arrived for a whole-hearted attempt to apply to morning and evening journalism the lessons learnt in the school of *Tit-Bits* and the *Star*. The trade had to undergo many disagreeable experiences before it would yield, above all in morning newspapers, to "commercial journalism."

When Stead left the *Pall Mall Gazette* and was succeeded by Edward Cook, the paper proceeded along lines that, in comparison with Stead's, were certainly restrained. But whatever the profits had been since Yates Thompson took over the *Pall Mall* from George Smith they were insufficient to protect the property

from the risk of re-sale. In less than two years after Cook had been appointed editor Thompson was approached by agents of the opposing party. Thompson was known to be anxious to escape paying out a heavy capital sum on account of the new machinery and new premises urgently necessary. "As for the Party I feel no compunction at all. They have done nothing for me, though I did a real service to them in 1880 by turning the paper round." Yates Thompson might have been willing to maintain the Pall Mall Gazette as a Liberal organ but for a refusal to do "something" for him. "They despise the Press," Thompson told Cook. "Mr. Gladstone might easily have kept the Daily Chronicle and probably the Daily Telegraph if he had baroneted Lloyd and Lawson." The Conservatives, it so happened, were interested to regain their old paper, and in 1892 the Gazette was purchased by a newcomer to England, to the political scene and to the publishing business: William Waldorf Astor. He promptly reconverted it to Conservatism, of course, at the expense of losing Cook, the Editor, in whose place he put Douglas Straight. Cook, like his predecessor Stead, was offered the aid of Newnes-always earnest in the Liberal cause. Stead's Review of Reviews (he had the services of a curiously active manager of whom much was later to be heard) was from the first a success; the active manager made it a valuable property. Newnes's Strand Magazine, founded in 1891, was also doing well; moreover Tit-Bits was scarcely affected even by intense competition. These and other profitable supports moved the owner to listen to a new scheme. On January 31, 1893, Newnes brought out a new and Liberal evening journal, the Westminster Gazette, under the editorship of Cook. It was designed upon Pall Mall lines for the same sort of West End audience. It was the last newspaper of the kind to be started. Much good Liberal money was lost upon it before, as a morning journal, it was discontinued.

That the new public as a whole was not as interested in party as the old could not forever be ignored; but that the prosperity of an evening paper was determined less by party considerations than by journalistic quality, broad social appeal and specific policy was not recognized even ten years after the foundation of *Tit-Bits*. Newnes himself forgot that truth or imagined that his *Westminster Gazette* would ever remain unaffected. For a time political motives weighed heavily with proprietors. They continued to rely upon the party machine and its short-range purse power

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> J. Saxon Mills, Life of Sir Edward Cook (London, 1921), p. 115. The practice of ennobling newspaper proprietors was beginning at this time. Borthwick of the Morning Post had been knighted in 1880 on the advice of Disraeli, promoted Baronet in 1887 and created a peer in 1895. See Appendix, p. 780.

instead of upon the broad mass of popular support with its corollary of a deep-seated social and genuine economic power. Newspapers, unable to make ends meet, either sought out the Whips or tried to secure direct support from a rich man with convictions; or failing convictions, ambitions to be advanced at his own expense. William Waldorf Astor and George Newnes both possessed means. The old Pall Mall Gazette secured a new Conservative proprietor, and the new Westminster an old Liberal. Thus, in 1893, with The Globe (Conservative) edited by R. E. Francillon, the St. James's backed by Gibbs and still edited by Greenwood, there were four penny "class" evening papers. There were three halfpenny papers, the Echo (Independent), the Evening News (Conservative), specializing in crime, the Star (Liberal), specializing in entertainment and sport.

O'Connor's Star had been a pronounced journalistic success, but its political line was not altogether satisfactory to its owners and, moreover, it did not prosper financially. There was no lack of enterprise. The Echo's decision to abandon the publication of the prophecies of professional tipsters was of immediate assistance to the Star's "Capt. Coe." The older paper had come under the direction of Passmore Edwards, who felt it his mission to educate as well as amuse his halfpenny public. In politics the Star appealed to the widest audience. It announced them as "outspokenly Radical, without fear, without shift, without compromise." It was O'Connor's Irish, and not his domestic. politics that made him a tolerable editor to the Liberal financiers of his choice. After the 1885 cleavage over Home Rule, pure Gladstonism had been represented in the morning by the faithful Daily News, and in the evening by the Pall Mall Gazette, which had not then been lost. The Irish politics of the Star, therefore, were now of importance to its Liberal proprietors, and for their sake they could bear with exclusive Home Rule preoccupation. O'Connor was not keen enough on social radicalism. But they could not so easily bear the financial losses of the paper, and it was not long before these led to complaints. The Editor, too, was considered irregular in his attendance at the office. In 1890 O'Connor was succeeded by his assistant, Henry W. Massingham. The new Editor, equally, did not make the Star pay and his "socialism" was blamed. Massingham resigned after six months' friction—the party machine had spoken thus quickly.

After Massingham, James Stuart, formerly Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Professor of Mechanical Science in the University, M.P. for Hoxton, an intimate of Gladstone's, and chairman of the *Star*, made it his business to see that pure

Gladstonism prevailed; he himself helped the paper with new money and guided it back to moderate orthodoxy by writing the leading articles. In the place of an able political apostle the proprietors now admitted a good working journalist. Ernest Parke, who had earlier been on the staff of the Echo, was appointed "Managing" Editor. There was an improvement in the finances of the paper. The renewal of faith which followed this direct exercise of the proprietor's control led the directors to cherish the ambition of pioneering with a morning paper. Although to price such a paper at a halfpenny was almost suicide, Stuart's father-in-law, Jeremiah Colman, was prepared to consider the idea. The possession of the Star made possible the economic production of a morning paper. The costs of printing and distribution in the hineties, while not comparable with those ruling to-day, were serious enough, but they permitted experiment on a scale impossible to-day. Journalism still being a profession and not a business, political not commercial motives, particularly the strong "Toryism" of the London Press, in contrast with the strong Liberalism of the country, finally led Colman and Stuart to support a cause which could count only upon the Daily News among the morning journals. The existence of the new reading public gave the project a sporting chance. It was resolved to try the experiment.

The halfpenny morning paper, the Morning Leader, was timed to appear on Monday, May 23, 1892. The date was forestalled by a competitor who won by a week-end. A well-known Anglo-American journalist, Chester Ives, who was originally proprietor of the American Register and Morning News published in Paris, had failed with that effort and had sold the Morning News section of that paper to a French syndicate and then assisted in its transformation into Le Matin. He next came to London and on Saturday, May 21, 1892, brought out the paper that anticipated Colman and Stuart, Morning-the "People's Daily." After an initial period of political neutrality, during which it may be assumed that Liberals or Conservatives with money were being sought, the Morning came down on the Unionist side. proprietors of the paper were a group prepared to venture money in journalistic support of theatrical speculations. Morning's notices of plays were contributed by one of the most energetic of the reporting staff, Kennedy Jones, formerly of the old-established Birmingham Daily Mail, a man then unknown but whose name was soon to become famous.

Notwithstanding the enterprise of Ives and Jones, Morning soon encountered serious difficulties. These were not connected

#### THE FIRST MORNING HALFPENNY PAPER

with its proprietor, its politics, its contents; or with its editor, or even with its dramatic critic. It was the technical trade situation which upset calculations. The Morning Leader, which first appeared on the Monday following the Saturday chosen by Morning, had little difficulty in disposing of the competition of Chester Ives. Professor Stuart was bound to beat him if only by his superior means of wholesale distribution. The trade associations of newsagents had long given the newspaper proprietors and promoters some anxiety. In 1868, the Echo, the first evening halfpenny paper, found itself embarrassed by the opposition to that price of the wholesale newsagents. Their organization had been built up by the sale of the higher-priced papers and they restricted the circulation of halfpenny papers on the ground that while, copy for copy, they were just as much trouble to handle, they gave them less than half the profit from penny papers. Chester Ives found himself balked by antagonism of this kind. On the other hand Stuart, who faced the same opposition, had the advantage of the horse-van and cycle organization of the Star and consequently had no difficulty in circumventing the wholesalers' embargo. Morning remained without an alternative system of distribution and six months after publication its losses amounted to £30,000. At this point the proprietor closed his cheque book and both Chester Ives and Kennedy Jones left. Morning, however, managed to find new backers and several rapid changes of proprietorship marked the paper's short career before it ceased publication in what turned out to be circumstances of some dignity. Much money, however, was yet to be spent upon it. Indeed, between 1894 and 1898, money was being lost upon nearly all the morning and evening journals.

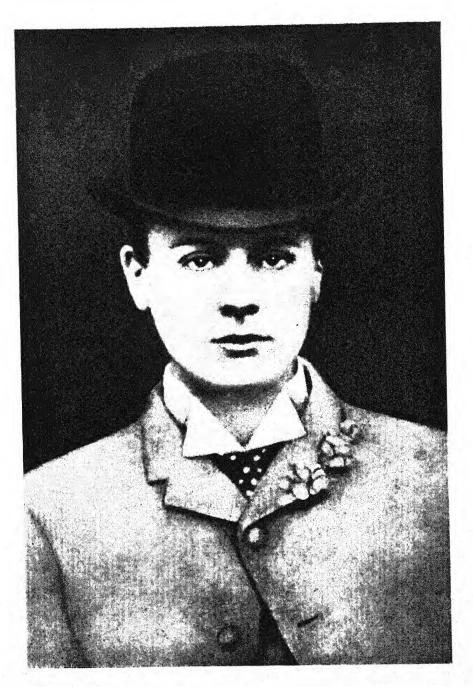
On the other hand, vast and unprecedented sums were being made by promoters of the new type of penny weekly on the lines of Newnes's success. Notwithstanding the intense competition *Tit-Bits* had little difficulty in maintaining its lead. This fact proved that a market had been created which no single weekly was able to saturate. Scores of new weeklies, printing widely varying selections of "Bits" and all written in the same brief and bright style, were announced between 1881 and the end of the decade. Some quickly perished; many were soon reconstructed; others prospered almost as much as *Tit-Bits* itself; a couple equalled it in circulation and one almost surpassed it in mass-circulation, pecuniary profit and journalistic influence.

Among the host of competitors the most notable of all did not appear for seven years after the original. In 1886 Alfred Harmsworth, who, it has been seen, was an early contributor to

Tit-Bits, joined one W. D. Carr, a family friend, in the firm of Carr and Company, of Paternoster Square. Harmsworth was twenty-two years of age when he risked £1,000 of his own savings from journalism upon a journal of his own. His idea was that a popular Notes and Queries might go if printed in the style of Tit-Bits. Accordingly, he brought out Answers to Correspondents on June 12, 1888. Success was not immediate. Something like £1.750 had been lost before the title was shortened to Answers and changes were made in the contents. The turning point came when the paper, in the style of Tit-Bits, offered £1 a week for life as the prize for the nearest guess of the balance in the Bank of England on a certain day. Harmsworth ruled that every guess must be accompanied by the signatures of five witnesses to the identity of the competitor. By this simple device the name of the paper and the news of the competition were advertised to a proportionately vast public; over 780,000 cards were sent in. Within a few months Answers was an admirably profitable property and in the spring of 1889 the firm of Answers and Co., Limited, was incorporated with a capital of £3,000 to acquire the business of Carr and Co. In this company Alfred Harmsworth (of 31, Pandora Road, West Hampstead, and Mrs. Harmsworth-for he had married in the previous year) owned half the shares. The secretary of the company was Harold Harmsworth, a brother who left the Civil Service in order to come into the business.

Newnes also was expanding. In 1891 the firm of George Newnes, Limited, was formed to acquire *Tit-Bits*, the *Strand Magazine*, the *Review of Reviews* and other publications. It was soon after the incorporation that Newnes's share in the *Review of Reviews* was sold to Stead for the large sum of £10,000. The firm had a capital of £400,000, of which £150,000 was issued to the trade in shares at 5s. premium. No publishing company had ever before offered to take the public into partnership and most of the shares were taken up by newsagents and other members of the trade who had the best of professional reasons for knowing the soundness of the undertaking.

The prosperity of Answers, only less at this period than that of Tit-Bits, equally moved its owners to invent other new periodicals. Both Newnes and Harmsworth were beginning to see that their single organizations could edit and publish, sometimes from a single office, a number of weekly periodicals; that the same staff could handle them provided the publication days were suitably spaced, and that working costs and overheads could be advantageously spread over the publications. In 1890 Harmsworth established the Pandora Publishing Company, Limited. Its capital



ALFRED HARMSWORTH
From a photograph taken in 1885

#### THE BEGINNINGS OF HARMSWORTH

of £500 was privately subscribed for the purpose of issuing a new type of popular illustrated humorous weekly at the then unprecedented price for such a periodical of one halfpenny. The new venture, *Comic Cuts*, first issued on May 17, 1890, was an instant success.

In the following year Alfred Harmsworth and his brother felt encouraged to form the Periodical Publishing Company, Limited, to carry out a still more ambitious plan. With Answers and Comic Cuts publishing at handsome profits, Alfred, with Harold Harmsworth at his side, turned his attention to a more original field of enterprise. The magazine for the lady of fashion had been a feature in publishing since the beginning of the century, but the middle-class woman with a family had not been so noticed. The Harmsworths set themselves to supply weekly publications covering the whole range of the interests of women. The most successful, Home Chat, "the Daintiest Little Magazine in the World," was first published on March 23, 1895. With a serial by Helen Mathers, a short story by Cutcliffe Hyne, instructions on etiquette by a Lady of Title and notes on cookery by Mrs. N. Beeton, the whole lavishly illustrated in line and half-tone, the magazine was a huge success. From the sixth number there was added to the cover the proud legend "Founded by Alfred Harmsworth."

In the meantime an opportunity to enter the more risky field of daily journalism had been placed within his reach. The Evening News which, it has been seen, published its first issue on July 26, 1881, had in the course of a few years cost its Liberal backers so much that they were glad to sell it to a syndicate of Conservatives. The fortunes of the Evening News, however, did not improve with its change of politics and by 1894 a vast sum had been spent upon it and there were urgent debts to the extent of £20,000. The Conservatives were now tired of the expense, and the competitive situation in the evening newspaper trade rendered the future hopeless. There was still the old Echo, which the Evening News had once set itself to beat; the Star, which, despite editorial and political changes, had hardly been made to pay; and, since 1893, a newcomer, the Sun, founded by O'Connor some years after he left the Star.

In 1894 the situation of the debt-ridden Evening News was decidedly inconvenient. Money was needed for development as well as for debts, and both political parties had already lost upon it so much that neither could be persuaded to provide for its future and scarcely for its present. The existing Conservative

owners thought they would be lucky if they could escape further expense by selling the paper for the price of the debts and any little surplus that could be secured. The Sun, only twelve months old, combined to make the Star and the News feel very uncomfortable. The general view of the trade at the time was that the Star was the best of the three, the Sun unstable but lively, and the News hopeless.

The Sun's chief sub-editor at this time was Kennedy Jones, formerly, it has been noted, of Morning. He was in close touch with all trade developments from the inside. With early knowledge of the internal position of the Evening News he secured an option to purchase it-although he himself possessed only a little money. For obvious reasons no politician was now likely to be interested; and, if any were, the existing editor and owner would enjoy better access to them. Consequently, if Kennedy Jones could form a syndicate he would need help from inside the trade rather than outside it. Looking round the newspaper trade he saw little sign of the right prospect. He did see, however, that his knowledge would be more useful and his future more secure in a company which did not include other daily newspaper men. He would do well, therefore, to persuade somebody to come into the syndicate connected, say, with the weekly side of the publishing business, where, in fact, money was being made on a great scale. Hence Kennedy Jones sought out Alfred Harmsworth. In consideration of his option and of his experience, Jones asked to be appointed to the editorial staff of the completely revised paper which should be pushed on aggressive up-to-date lines.

Harmsworth saw that Jones's fund of experience in Glasgow, Birmingham and London was exactly what he lacked and that it was vital to the success of any such enterprise as the revival of the Evening News as a popular journal. Harmsworth was not averse from considering Jones's offer if he could convince himself that together they had the means to make a success of it. The scheme was exhaustively discussed. The deal finally went through in August for £23,000, of which £5,000 only was cash and £18,000 in fully-paid shares in the future "Evening News," Limited. Harmsworth thus found himself in control and possession of an evening paper which had cost its several backers not less than £200,000. The publication of Harmsworth's Evening News coincided with his thirtieth birthday. He was then in control of Answers, Home Chat, Comic Cuts, Illustrated Chips (comicalities for errand-boys), Forget-Me-Not (novelettes for the kitchen), Marvel (adventure stories for boys) and half a dozen other miscellaneous secular and religious weeklies. The whole of

#### HARMSWORTH BUYS THE EVENING NEWS

this concern, or rather series of concerns, had been built up in seven years from the foundation of *Answers* and thirteen from that of *Tit-Bits*. The opportunities created by the Education Act of 1870 seemed infinite. Beside Newnes the adventurous pioneer, and Alfred Harmsworth the ardent follower, a third publisher was entering the field. He, too, came from the *Tit-Bits* school. From 1881 when the paper first came out, competitors were required to answer correctly ten questions printed in each of no fewer than thirteen consecutive numbers of *Tit-Bits*. The most correct of the vast number of solutions received came from a Wykehamist and the son of a Wykehamist. He was aged 18, and still at the school. The prize was a clerkship in the office of *Tit-Bits* with the salary of £100 a year. The winner's name, Cyril Arthur Pearson, was announced in *Tit-Bits* of September 26, 1884.

Pearson took up his clerkship in October; his progress was almost as spectacular as Harmsworth's. By the following April he was assisting in the Editorial Department and a year later had applied for and secured the position of manager which had suddenly become vacant. Three years later Newnes gave him the additional responsibility of business manager of Stead's Review of Reviews. He was the young man to whom its commercial success was largely due. In June, 1890, Pearson determined to set up on his own account, borrowed £3,000, took with him two colleagues from Tit-Bits, and brought out on July 26. 1890, the first issue of Pearson's Weekly, "To Interest, To Elevate, To Amuse." It carried with it a free Railway Insurance Policy of £1,000 and promised other insurances upon "infinitely more liberal terms" than were offered by the existing weeklies. Its editorial policy was to provide "the best pennyworth of sound literature that can possibly be produced." While guessing competitions—that is, of the Harmsworth sort—were explicitly condemned as unhealthy, frequent competitions to which no objection could be taken were guaranteed to entertain and benefit readers.

Pearson married at 22; at 24 he had two daughters to keep besides *Pearson's Weekly*, which, like all new publications, required subsidy at first. For some time it was doubtful whether Pearson could keep it going. He had welcome support from W. H. Smith, but he was challenging Newnes and Harmsworth. To safeguard himself he was active in promoting other magazines upon which to fall back if the *Weekly* should fail. A difficult corner was at last turned with the assistance of Sir William Ingram of the *Illustrated London News*. Early in 1894 both Pearson and

Harmsworth were recognized, equally with Newnes, as the leaders of London's most successful publishing industry.

Newnes possessed his "sea-green" evening paper, the Westminster, which he subsidized. So far only Harmsworth had proved his ability so to apply to an evening paper the lessons of Tit-Bits and Answers that he could turn the defunct Evening News into a successful profit-making publication. He was running it entirely without subsidy, treating the newspaper much as a branch of the publishing business as Home Chat. This was a revolution indeed. Journalism had at last become a trade and journalists were in the employment of a publisher, not of a party nor of a rich man performing a party service by paying their salaries. Harmsworth allowed neither politics nor politicians to dominate the Evening News. If it could be sure of independent commercial success, the Evening News would try to dominate politics, to create policy. The moment a newspaper began to stand on its own feet its editorial hands became, as John Walter II and Barnes demonstrated, politically free. The way to political freedom of the Press lay through economic freedom. Circulation, as the second Walter had proved and Levy Lawson after him, meant vastly more than a multitude of pennies or halfpennies; advertisers would pay pounds and pounds to reach that multitude. Out of these funds editors could be paid adequate sums to train journalists to write brightly and briefly. With himself as editorin-chief, such a newspaper, Harmsworth thought, could aspire to the power wielded by Barnes and Delane. The success of Harmsworth's Evening News was incontestable by the summer of 1894.

Meanwhile, *The Times*, impoverished by the expenses of the Parnell commission, antiquated in its production methods, distracted by internal dissensions, was rapidly being outdistanced at home by the new competition. In 1889 when MacDonald died, John Walter III was 69 years old. It was time for him to bring forward the younger man.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The dispute between the Chief Proprietor and the smaller proprietors, which culminated in the sale of *The Times* in 1908, began in 1885. See Chapter XIV.

# V

# ARTHUR FRASER WALTER AND C. F. MOBERLY BELL

RTHUR WALTER had assisted his father in the management of The Times since 1885, but his activities in that position had been restricted. The young man exerted no influence upon the paper under old MacDonald's management, owing to the latter's desire, natural in the circumstances, to deal directly with his father. In 1889, when MacDonald died and Arthur Walter's situation abruptly changed, he found himself handicapped with the combined responsibilities of an ageing father, a large estate, and a newspaper business that was unfamiliar to him. His education had been of the type likely to lead to success at everything except business. He had done well at Eton, where he played for two years in the Eleven; he used his time well at Christ Church, Oxford, where he took a First in Classical Moderations, played in the Oxford Eleven, was placed in the third class in Literae Humaniores, and then called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn. He was twenty-three when the tragic end of his elder brother on Christmas Eve, 1870,1 suddenly brought him to London in order to prepare himself to succeed in due course as Head of The Times. His father, who joined him formally in the Management, but stood aloof from everybody, gave him little definite responsibility, thinking that regular attendance at the office would bring him a knowledge of the business. This left an enduring mark upon Arthur's character. John Walter III, who had set his hopes and affections upon his eldest son, John, made no effort to fill the void left by his untimely death. Arthur could not but feel deeply the coldness and indifference of his father during those years of waiting, and in the passive role to which he was relegated found compensation in his home at Finchampstead, which at that time formed part of the Bear Wood Estate. Here Arthur Walter devoted himself to those country pursuits to which he was naturally inclined. The result was that when, at the age of forty-seven, he eventually succeeded to the Chief Proprietorship

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. II, p. 499.

of *The Times* and to the obligations attaching to the ownership of Bear Wood, he did not find it easy to adapt himself to these new responsibilities. Fortunately the unquestioning loyalty of the staff, which his father had always enjoyed, was now transferred as a matter of course to himself. He could count both the Editor and the Manager as his personal friends.

In one respect he found his inheritance curtailed: the ownership of Printing House Square and the printing business was now split up by an unforeseen provision of his father's will leaving one third of the property to Arthur's young half-brother Godfrey. Such a division of interests might well have caused dissension in any family and a dangerous conflict of authorities at P.H.S. Harmony was never in fact disturbed. Godfrey always readily deferred to his brother's wishes in any matter affecting the paper, and thanks to his tact and loyalty their relations, despite a marked difference in age and temperament, were uniformly easy from the beginning.

Arthur now made Bear Wood his home and in the four days he spent each week at P.H.S. he maintained regular contact with the Manager, to whom he gave full executive authority. and with the Editor, in whose hands he was well content to leave editorial policy. The Printing Department he entrusted entirely to his half-brother Godfrey. If Arthur Walter had not the general interest in public affairs that had characterized his father, a piece of slipshod English or a flaw in the writer's argument was something which the Editor was sure to hear of, just as Delane did in the time of the "Griff". Occasional and particular questions of public policy, such for instance as concerned the Army and Imperial Defence, he liked to discuss with the Editor or the relevant members of the staff. He took charge of all actions at law in which the paper was concerned and was consulted on all questions touching the credit of the paper, as well as on staff appointments. He considered all proposed departures from the established custom of the paper, whether in type, make-up or management. In such discussions he was frank and outspoken, without being insistent or pressing. Buckle possessed qualities of mind and character that had always strongly appealed to him. With such a man Arthur Walter could be perfectly frank without risk of offence. A good illustration of this occurred in 1895. The Conservatives, on coming into power in July of that year, harboured the design of displacing Mr. Speaker Gully, who had been elected a few weeks before by the outgoing Liberal Administration, in favour of Sir Mathew White Ridley. Buckle had already given his



ARTHUR FRASER WALTER

CHIEF PROPRIETOR OF THE TIMES 1894-1908

CHAIRMAN THE TIMES PUBLISHING COMPANY LTD 1908-1910

After a painting in oils by H. Rivière

#### THE FOURTH WALTER

assent to this proposed break with a long-established custom, but the Chief Proprietor took strong objection to a step in which he foresaw a dangerous precedent, and he succeeded in converting the Editor to his view. Arthur Walter was heard to remark, with obvious satisfaction, after his talk with the Editor, that he had just saved the Speakership from becoming a Party appointment. Except during the Season, when the family were at 40, Upper Grosvenor Street, Arthur Walter stayed at the Private House, No. 1, Printing House Square, and as a rule he lunched there. Though he employed a resident agent at Bear Wood he himself took an active part in the improvement of his estate, which extended to over 7,000 acres. The drill hall at Wokingham and the Manor House at Finchampstead were both built by him. Arthur Walter was a man of plain words. If persons conscious of their own importance or devoid of humour found him unsympathetic, plain men and women found him agreeable and entertaining, especially if they showed no sign of awe and refrained from compliments to The Times.

Arthur Walter had nothing of his father's austerity but he was wanting in imagination, a deficiency which, combined with a rigid habit of mind and a ruthless critical faculty, rendered him antagonistic to any new idea which seemed to conflict with his own long-cherished principles. For one in his position the circle of his acquaintance was not large. Few knew him well. To the end of his life his familiar friends were chiefly those of his Eton and Oxford days. In later years The Times cast over him the same spell of reserve as over his father. The consciousness of absolute authority, willingly deferred to, combined with an entire absence of personal vanity, disinclined him to make his presence felt in the office more often than was necessary. He liked to cultivate personal relations with the staff and the chief Foreign Correspondents and for this purpose he considered weekends at Bear Wood afforded the best opportunity. For contact with the departments he came to rely upon his daily meetings with the Manager, Moberly Bell, who usually lunched with him and his brother Godfrey in the private house, and who there submitted all cheques for his signature. This detachment tended, as his outside interests increased—he became a County Councillor, a Railway Director and Colonel Commandant of the County Territorial Battalion-to grow into an aloofness, the consequences of which were to appear later.

Godfrey Walter was the third son of John Walter III by his second wife, and was originally destined for the Army. From Wellington he went to Sandhurst, from which his father

withdrew him when his elder brother, Norman, died. He was brought to P.H.S. and put under the supervision of MacDonald Upon his death ten years later, Godfrey Walter was made head of the Printing Office. At this time he was of handsome appearance and engaging manners, and judicious and methodical beyond his years, traits which he no doubt inherited from his Scottish mother. Like others of his family, he possessed an unshakable faith in the uniqueness, supremacy and invulnerability of The Times. His personality was perhaps more easily associated with a Scottish grouse-moor or a West End club than with the busy professional atmosphere of his department. When he became its head, strangers armed with influential introductions still came from far and wide to admire the Walter presses in action. At parting they were wont to make no secret of their admiration and Godfrey saw it as his obvious task to keep his department running smoothly and at the high state of efficiency in which he had found it. The Times was a non-union house and the printers, known collectively as "The Times Companionship", were keen, efficient and proud of their work for the paper. The strict rule which separated the Printing Department from the rest rarely gave him the occasion to see the Manager, except when the amount of overset matter appeared excessive. This rigid separation of function rendered his relations with both Editor and Manager somewhat distant, though uniformly friendly. Towards Arthur Walter, who was not interested in printing, and who never discussed the business of the paper with him unnecessarily, Godfrey deferred as to a senior partner who was also head of the family.

As printing machinery improved, reforms imposed themselves from time to time. In the nineties the Walter presses, which had served for a generation, were replaced by the more modern Hoes. In the foundry ladles gave way to junior autoplates. The Wicks typecasting machine was introduced, and with it a mechanical type-distributor. Mechanical stitchers were fitted to the presses for the supplements, and the day came when the whole paper was cut and folded as now. But no great change was made in the composing room. The old Kastenbein composer, which had been developed in the office thirty years earlier, was still used since it still answered the special requirements of The Times. To scrap so much excellent machinery in favour of a brand new outfit in order to supply the needs of a steadily dwindling circulation would have appeared to Godfrey's prudent mind both rash and unbusinesslike. And yet from the date when the small proprietors threatened their action, 1 if not before, it 1 See Chapter XIV: "The Times in Adversity and Litigation."

#### ARTHUR WALTER CONSIDERS THE POSITION

should have been evident to Arthur and Godfrey Walter that a serious conflict with the co-proprietors could only be averted by a drastic revision of printing costs. The brothers agreed, however, in preferring to resist demands which appeared to both of them outrageous rather than to seek agreement by compromise.

The situation in the metropolitan news trade that confronted Walter in 1894 was totally different from that which faced his father in 1847 when he entered upon the office of Chief Proprietor of *The Times*. The most important changes between 1847 and 1894 had been the establishment of a penny metropolitan Press and the building up of a great daily provincial Press. There had been the creation, described earlier, of a weekly Press which without touching news or politics provided the capital for Harmsworth's paper—the first of its kind—which included both without making politics a speciality or the pretext for a subsidy. The reader has seen at the end of a previous Chapter that sensations and scoops did not suffice to place Stead's new journalism upon a paying basis. Even had it done so there would not have been the slightest disposition at Bear Wood to adjust *The Times* to it. Harmsworth's completely successful *Evening News* would have been unreservedly condemned had it ever been allowed to enter Bear Wood.

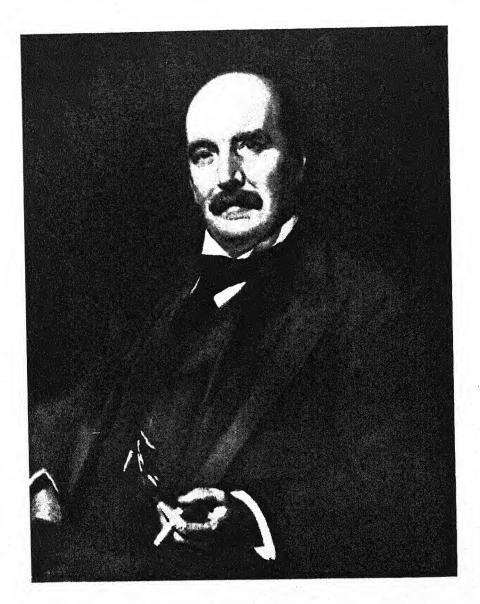
It was in these circumstances that Arthur Walter considered the situation four years before his father's death. There had long been a tendency at Printing House Square to regard *The Times* as a permanent and self-sufficient institution, which would continue to run for ever by its own momentum, so long as there was no departure from methods and principles consecrated by long tradition. A short experience of responsibility convinced Arthur Walter that this was not enough. The conservative methods which had served the paper so well in the days of monopoly were obviously not adequate in an age of keen competition; and yet there was nobody at Printing House Square who realized the necessity of attracting the younger generation of readers, or of taking advantage of new developments in salesmanship and advertising. The revenue, both from sales and advertisements, was steadily falling. How to devise the remedy was the most urgent question which faced the Chief Proprietor. He decided the question in a way characteristically his own: he appointed a man in whom he had complete confidence, one who was unknown to the staff, who had not been educated in England, who had in fact left the country at

the age of eighteen. It was an extraordinary appointment and it was an extraordinary success.

On the death of John Cameron MacDonald, nothing could have seemed less likely than that Charles Frederick Moberly Bell should succeed him. Bell was born in Egypt: after a few years at school in England he was sent back to Egypt to become a clerk in the commercial house with which his family was connected, and he continued in business there for the next twenty years. Following the example of his elder brother he became an occasional correspondent of The Times, with such success that in 1882 he gave up his other interests in order to become titular Correspondent. It was in this capacity that he came into intimate contact (he had met the Walters in London in 1885) with Arthur Walter, who with his wife, visited Egypt in 1889. Walter was so favourably impressed that, when a few months later he suddenly found himself responsible for the management of The Times, he sent for Bell. In response to a cable. Bell came post haste to London. He remained in the service of The Times until he died in his office chair twenty-one years later.

Walter's new assistant was a big, fine-looking man, with a strong face and short moustache. His manner radiated energy and vitality: he was a fluent and incisive talker, with a good resonant voice and plenty of stories, which he told with great humour and gusto. An accident had made him lame and he consequently preferred his armchair to bodily exercise. His form of sport was talking. A fellow guest at the Walters' country house describes him as always ready to exchange ideas and to argue with anybody on any subject. He enjoyed a contest of wits for its own sake and, however keen the dispute, an argument with him was sure to end as good-humouredly as it began. After dinner Walter and Bell played chess, Walter smoking a long cigar and moving with great deliberation after prolonged thought; his guest smoking cigarettes and deciding quickly on his moves. Bell carried an air of urgency in all that he did. A friend lunching at Printing House Square described him as bursting into the dining room straight from his desk with his long frock coat wide open, and a look of set determination on his face. In spite of his limp1 and his heavy build, all his movements, like his manner of speech, were brisk and decided, as though he had important business awaiting him and no time to lose. Bell's office was over Arthur Walter's (which is now the Board Room), and its door was always open. There was nothing

<sup>1</sup> Bell injured his ankle on September 15, 1884; see p. 41.



CHARLES FREDERICK MOBERLY BELL
ASSISTANT MANAGER, MANAGER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE TIMES
1891-1911

From a painting in oils by Emil Fuchs

peculiar constitution. The Times, as he could not fail to see. was in form a co-partnership, in which the large and constantly increasing body of co-partners had no voice in the control. although their liability was unlimited, and the Chief Proprietor, while ultimately responsible for the conduct of the paper, was at the same time the owner of the printing business with which it was connected by the custom of the family. Walter thus represented two different, and in some respects conflicting, interests.1 This arrangement dated from the death of the first John Walter in 1812. It worked creakily but well enough so long as the paper prospered and large profits were regularly earned, but it was bound to become a potential danger when the paper should cease to pay. This was a possibility which had been foreseen by the second and third Walter, and became in due course a perpetual source of preoccupation to the fourth. He did not, however, take Bell into his confidence regarding it, or attempt to examine the whole situation with him. If Arthur Walter's encouragement had been forthcoming, Bell would assuredly have tackled the problem with his habitual determination, and perhaps more than his usual enthusiasm, and possibly have found a solution, with far reaching consequences for the history of the paper. There was no sign until after the lapse of years, and the accumulation of difficulties and debts, that Bell resented his exclusion from participation in the troubles that beset the co-partnership.

For the first ten years or so after the death of his father, Arthur Walter found that Bear Wood and County interests were taking up a good deal of his time, and he began to limit his attendance at P.H.S. to three or four days a week. Bell, on the other hand, had no interests outside the paper; he never left London if he could help it, and was to be found at work at all hours. The range of his activities increased accordingly. Both he and his wife were fond of society and hospitably inclined, and they entertained at their West End house a varied assortment of friends and acquaintances. Thus Bell gradually became known to more people of prominence in political and other circles than any of his colleagues, not excepting the Editor.

In estimating Bell's services as Manager of *The Times* it must be remembered first that Arthur Walter brought him in at a time when the financial position of the paper had seriously deteriorated and was going from bad to worse; and secondly, that his power of action was limited in important respects.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Vol. I, pp. 174 ff, for an account of the separation of interests between the proprietors of *The Times* and the owners of the printing business. Fusion of the two interests was only brought about in 1908. See Chapter XIX, infra.

#### THE FALLING CIRCULATION

He could not innovate without consulting the Chief Proprietor. He could consider no reform which might seem to entail a sacrifice of quality or familiarity in the substance, tone or even appearance of the paper. Upon these points Arthur Walter, like his father, was known to be immoveable. It was Bell's task to raise the revenue of the paper as he found it and as the family was determined to keep it. Fortunately, although the paper had fallen on evil days, financially speaking, it continued to enjoy its former political and social prestige apparently unimpaired. That this continued to be possible was due in greatest measure to Bell. And the conditions of the news-trade in the early nineties made such a continuance more difficult than either Walter or Bell could be expected to realize in advance of the teaching of experience.

John Walter III died in 1894. He was 76 years old and had been Chief Proprietor for 47 years. He had lived through the period of the paper's greatest prosperity and had witnessed its decline. The Times then came under the administration of a Chief Proprietor and an acting Manager, neither of whom could foresee the changes destined, within a decade, to develop and transform the entire trade situation, and to involve, as an inescapable consequence, fundamental changes in The Times, and in the constitution of the partnership which owned and published it, as well as the primacy of the Walter family and the personal security of Bell. The circulation of The Times had been falling steadily for twenty years before the Parnell commission.

Disappointment among the proprietors of *The Times* was inevitable. In 1890 the year's disbursement to the holders of "shares" amounted to £36,866, whereas in 1870 it had been £90,000. Criticism from among the many proprietors had been heard before; it was not unexpected by John Walter III when he appointed his son joint manager in 1885. He was then careful to ask the assent of the holders of shares. Although the majority were glad to sign, one, Mrs. Clara Sibley, objected. This act of dissent, then deemed of slight importance, was passed over. To letters of criticism Arthur Walter returned a statement of his intention to continue "on the old lines" the principles and practices of *The Times* as they had been enshrined by John Walter III. The fourth Walter did not observe that from 1895 the *Evening News*, having never made a profit in fourteen years,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It was one of the reasons, however, why Bell was officially styled "Assistant" Manager.

was prospering handsomely under Alfred Harmsworth and Kennedy Jones, its new proprietors; just as his father had been unimpressed by the profits of the *Daily Telegraph* from 1865. Other enterprises, also doing well, were similarly ignored.<sup>1</sup>

They were, nevertheless, impressive. On July 7, 1896, after Harmsworth and Jones's success with the Evening News, the firm of Cyril Arthur Pearson, Limited, was registered with the object of acquiring Pearson's Weekly, Home Notes. Short Stories. and other publications. The capital, equal to that of Newnes's 1891 company, was £400,000. The managing director himself was thirty years of age, fifteen years junior to Newnes and a year younger than Harmsworth. Also in 1896, Alfred Harmsworth and his brother Harold (styled "Managerial Proprietor" of Answers) were considering the flotation of a new company to succeed "Answers, Limited," and to promote fresh capital for new enterprises. This year, besides being a turning-point in the personal fortunes of the Harmsworths, was significant also in determining the precedence between them and their rivals. Several years, however, were to pass before it was finally proved which of these three powers would dominate the industry. While Pearson had been perfecting his arrangements for the flotation of his company during the spring of 1896, both Newnes and Harmsworth were engaged in putting the finishing touches to plans for new morning papers. Newnes was out first with the Daily Courier, which appeared on April 23. He edited and managed it himself.

Harmsworth was not alone in his enterprise: he had an alert colleague, experienced in morning journalism, as well as in the conduct of the profitable Evening News. On the principle, known to more than one generation of newspaper men, that it is more economic to make two newspapers than one, Kennedy Jones had urged the creation of a morning "edition" of the Evening News. He had worked on the defunct Birmingham Daily Mail, founded under that title in 1870, and he suggested the old Birmingham title for the new London venture. The words of the suggested title were short and therefore apt for use in all forms of outdoor and other advertising. There was something in these ideas, Harmsworth thought. After eighteen months of preparatory work publication under that title was determined upon. It was hoped not only to make the Daily Mail a paying newspaper but to see that it was uniquely profitable. Any optimism as to the success of Newnes's half-size Daily Courier at a penny was killed when,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For these developments before the death of John Walter III in 1894, see Chapter IV, supra.

#### THE DAILY MAIL

on May 4, there appeared the first issue of the *Daily Mail* of eight pages of standard blanket size but price one halfpenny. The price was not new, but the value for money was; and the editorship so new as to be almost revolutionary. The demand for copies proved immense. By the time Newnes's *Daily Courier* ceased on August 15, Harmsworth's *Daily Mail* was established.

The key to the success of the Daily Mail did not lie in the right selection of party politics, still less in party subvention. It did not lie even in circulation as such. The Harmsworths had found out what Kennedy Jones, for all his experience, did not know. Answers had taught them that money was made out of selling space to advertisers and, moreover, to the same advertisers time after time. Once prove to an advertiser that he can prosper by advertising in the Daily Mail, a fortune was ready to hand. Accordingly it was essential, above all, that whatever its circulation amounted to, the Daily Mail should make a profit for those who advertised in it. This was no mere theory; it was the Harmsworth experience. In 1888 Harold Harmsworth, the managerial proprietor of Answers, had announced and advertised—not merely in the weekly itself but in the other papers that advertisers saw and used—that a chartered accountant's certificate of the circulation of Answers was at the disposal of interested advertising clients of the weekly. "Net Sales," was the fundamental idea of the new daily. Moreover, the Daily Mail was designed, edited and priced at a halfpenny in order to interest the public which the Harmsworths knew they understood. That public was the great and growing, vigorous "white-collared" lower-middle class. It was ambitious, and therefore inquisitive and acquisitive. It was proud and therefore expansionist and imperialistic. It was keen on improving its knowledge of world affairs and, in consequence, eager for news of them.

In order to attract the desired volume of advertising to the Daily Mail, and to give advertisers faith in the direct commercial utility to them of space in the paper, the Harmsworths used the surest means to prove to advertisers that they, the proprietors themselves, wholeheartedly believed in the publicity they were recommending them to purchase. They advertised the Daily Mail on a lavish scale. After the advertising campaign, the next operation was to reorganize and re-finance the Harmsworth properties. A beginning was made with "Answers, Limited." To acquire this business there was formed in October, 1896, the firm of Harmsworth Brothers, Limited. Thus the controlling director, Alfred Harmsworth, at thirty-one years of age, became responsible for a capital of £1,000,000—

two-and-a-half times that of C. Arthur Pearson, Limited. It seemed as if Harmsworth primacy was assured.

The second move was to capitalize the "Daily Mail, Limited." The paper had been started with a mere £15,000 got together by the two Harmsworths and Kennedy Jones. To promote that paper they had used the money yielded by the new capitalization by Harmsworth Brothers, Limited, of Answers. But the maximum success that might be gained from the application of new and expensive methods of publicity required still more capital. Harmsworth needed to get the investing public behind him. This had never been done for a daily newspaper but he had little difficulty. The money was generously subscribed. In two years the Daily Mail was making profits unequalled by any newspaper except The Times. That, alas, was thirty years earlier.

For some time before 1898 the figures at Printing House Square had been discouraging; and the facts, if not the figures, were known outside. The circulation of The Times in 1878 was upwards of 60,000; in the year 1898 the Daily Mail sold an average daily number of 800,000. The dividend on The Times was less than a quarter of that disbursed in 1878. The Daily Mail, in 1898, was the only morning paper making a handsome profit and the Evening News was the only evening paper whose figures were buoyant. In addition, Harmsworth was taking large, even vast, profits from his weeklies. Answers had declared a dividend of 22½ per cent. in 1896 and the Harmsworth Magazine, started in 1897, was also successful. Although Alfred Harmsworth was hardly interested in money for its own sake, huge profits were accumulating, and much more quickly than he, or his brother Harold, could deal with them. Harmsworth liked to invest his profits in himself and in his own publishing ideas, and in the publishing ideas of an editorial staff which he himself could control. With a clear profit of over £140,000 for the year 1897, he needed to look round to see what openings there were. Lucky as he had been hitherto, he could hardly hope to secure another Evening News, and there were very few dailies in London which, if he controlled them, could be made to pay without competing with his own existing morning and evening journals. The Standard was declining, but as an old family concern it would be difficult to secure; the Daily Telegraph or the Morning Post might well be considered later when the competitive Daily Mail—as a penny newspaper for a halfpenny had taken its expected effect of weakening their positions. The Dailv News (E. T. Cook from 1896 to 1901) and Daily Chronicle (H. W. Massingham from 1895 to 1899), then penny papers, were too closely tied to political syndicates, from neither of which was there any hint of a desire to transfer. There remained *The Times*. To Harmsworth it would be a glittering prize. Its supreme journalistic position fascinated him, and moreover he knew, as others did, that the Parnell verdict had been followed by decreased dividends and friction among the proprietors, the number of whom had been multiplied by the sub-divisions, in prosperous days, of the original sixteen shares into which the first Walter had divided the property. Alfred Harmsworth did not know Arthur Walter, but he made up his mind to seek an interview, should circumstances ever become favourable. In the meantime, Harmsworth, giving up any plan to extend his interest in the London daily Press, contented himself with purchasing a Sunday paper, the Weekly Dispatch, for £25,000. In the time spared from the Mail and the News he elaborated plans for an illustrated Encyclopædia and other large works to be issued in instalments.

There was about to develop, however, a surprise move in the morning Press. When, as has been seen in a previous chapter, Chester Ives and Kennedy Jones left Morning in 1893, that paper came successively into the hands of syndicates of Liberals, alternating with syndicates of Conservatives, who manipulated its politics and experimented with its style. Thus the personal and topical column nowadays known as "gossip" was brought in; the signed article, a new feature in journalism, made its regular appearance—on the front page. On September 5, 1898, when the paper again changed hands, the title was altered to London Morning. The new title, however, did not solve the old difficulties and another sale was effected to yet a new syndicate which altered the title to the Morning Herald. Almost immediately there followed another, this time final and highly significant, change in the proprietorship of Kennedy Jones's old paper. Now for the first time, and to the astonishment of Fleet Street, Cyril Arthur Pearson stepped into the daily newspaper business by purchasing the Morning Herald, and managing it from April 23, 1900. He wanted, he said, to try his hand at morning journalism and in the second place to make money. But, besides his already famous Fresh Air Fund, he wished to interest a wide public in the larger, social, ideas in which he believed. He changed the title of his new property on September 3, 1900, to the Daily Express and Morning Herald. The new publication had a frankly new aspect—alone it carried its main news, very liberally displayed with large headlines, upon the front page. In other directions it was more frankly American-Pearson had several

times paid long visits to New York—than any other of the morning papers. Although in politics, like Harmsworth in the Daily Mail, Pearson was a partisan of non-partyism, the Boer War encouraged in both publishers a mood of soul-stirring Imperialism. Both believed in taking the Flag to Pretoria. To Pearson the transition to Protection was easy, since for him it was an extension of his Imperialism. He found the way for himself, but his ardour for the cause soon led him into close association with Joseph Chamberlain.

Pearson himself edited the Daily Express—with the assistance of a "managing" editor. The editor-proprietor was determined to sustain the expected, and later admittedly, enormous daily losses: "they had been foreseen and provided for," he wrote in a leading article. The losses indeed were not light; in 1900 (nine months' working), £53,723; in 1902, £33,154. The paper then sought to attract readers by increasing the vigour of its championship of economic doctrines and imperialist measures. From 1903 the Express enthusiastically conducted Tariff Reform and Big Navy campaigns. The public responded and in that year a profit was realized. Elsewhere in the imperialist Press protective taxes upon food were as ardently controverted. Among the objectors was Alfred Harmsworth, who in both the Daily Mail and the Evening News ridiculed the "Stomach" tax. The Tariff gospel, therefore, while effectively preached in the Express every morning to an audience about one-third in size of the Mail's. lacked altogether a pulpit in the evenings, when a large section of the public had the leisure to read. Hence, when it came to Pearson's ears that a controlling interest in the St. James's Gazette could be had he was quick to investigate the opportunity of thus pushing home the Tariff Reform cause in the evening. Readers, he thought, would be faithful to a paper as to a cause.

Pearson duly acquired the control of the St. James's Gazette. The paper, founded by H. H. Gibbs for Frederick Greenwood in 1880, after the Pall Mall had been transferred to John Morley under the proprietorship of Henry Yates Thompson, had never prospered. Greenwood's proprietor, Lord Aldenham, as he later became, held it, however, for eight years. In August, 1888, the paper was transferred to Edward Hermann Steinkopf, a City man of speculative inclinations and, as the name suggests, of German origin. He was also the proprietor of Apollinaris, the table water, and he regarded the St. James's as filling a useful role in giving publicity to it and to several other Stock Exchange speculations in which he was interested. When Steinkopf bought it, Greenwood did not stay but preferred to start a new weekly,

#### PEARSON AND PROTECTION

the Anti-Jacobin, which quickly failed. The Conservative politics of the St. James's were maintained under Greenwood's successor, Sidney Low, whose term of editorship lasted for nine years. The paper does not seem even then to have made profits. It was assisted during this period by a close connexion with the German Embassy and it was believed that in return for printing communiqués upon international affairs the Germans benefited the paper's exchequer. The arrangement seems to have continued for some years. In 1897 Low resigned and his brilliant assistant, Hugh Chisholm, took his place. It was in 1903 that Pearson secured it. Scarcely, however, had Pearson begun to plan his programme for the St. James's, when it came to his ears that the Standard and the Evening Standard were for sale.

The morning paper, since it came into the hands of James Johnstone in 1857, had always maintained very close touch with Conservative Party headquarters. It had thus managed to make ends meet and even an occasional profit in spite of the uneconomic price of one penny at which it was sold from 1858. Johnstone himself then managed the Standard. The editor at its best period was John Gorst, who had the assistance of a most remarkable journalist in W. H. Mudford, his successor from 1878. Under James Johnstone's will, Mudford was appointed editor and manager for life, or until resignation. Before retiring in 1900, he appointed as his successor Byron Curtis, who held the chair just when the Tariff question most acutely divided the Conservatives. The matter became the more urgent on account of Pearson's campaign in the Express. The Standard was selected to lead the Conservative opposition; but whether or not this was good politics, it was hardly possible to say that it was good journalism, halfpenny or penny. Neither Pearson nor Chamberlain had succeeded in seriously interesting the whole country in Protection. The evidence, as Harmsworth was aware, was that readers of newspapers would not read politics morning, noon and night. Under Curtis, the Standard, as a property, rapidly declined.

When Pearson learnt that the Johnstone family (to which, also, he was related) desired to sell the Standard and the Evening Standard, he first surveyed the position with a political eye and next sought out Joseph Chamberlain. With his leader's encouragement Pearson proceeded to acquire control of both papers. At that time he already controlled the Birmingham Gazette, the Birmingham Express and the Birmingham Evening Dispatch; he owned the Newcastle Evening Mail and the Leicester Evening News. These were all profitable. The Daily Express, however, had still to pay a dividend. The St. James's was not yet

a profitable undertaking. In the circumstances, Pearson needed to bargain with the Johnstones. The price of the Standard property (£700,000 was originally asked) came down to £300,000. It then became necessary for Pearson to go out to find new money. "The Standard" Newspapers, Limited, which was formed for the purpose of acquiring the Standard (morning and evening editions) and the St. James's, had a capital of £350,000. Most of the cash was contributed by a well-known City stockbroker, Sir Alexander Henderson, later Lord Faringdon, a fervent Tariff Reformer. Pearson came into possession on November 17, 1904, and forthwith appointed to the Standard, as his new editor, Mr. H. A. Gwynne. In less than six months the St. James's was merged with the Evening Standard, which came under the editorship of W. H. Woodward.

Meanwhile it had become clear that the Daily Express was making very slight headway against the Daily Mail. Mr. Ralph Blumenfeld, one of the big men of the Daily Mail, was thought of as being willing to join the Daily Express and to give it that experience of daily journalism which had been Kennedy Jones's invaluable contribution to the Evening News and the Daily Mail from their earliest beginnings. But only in 1904, four years after the original issue of the Daily Express, was Blumenfeld secured. He came as chief, not merely "managing" editor, and the paper thus, for the first time, came into the hands of a journalist with inside knowledge of the methods by which Harmsworth's unprecedented successes had been achieved. In the next two years, 1905 and 1906, the Daily Express made a profit (before charging interest) of £10,000. Pearson might, it then seemed, become a metropolitan daily newspaper proprietor second only to Harmsworth. Indeed, there was a chance that he might even outdistance him.

Harmsworth was a man who would take great risks, and he had just given a singular demonstration of it. Never afraid of adventuring money in his own enterprises, he had brought out on November 21, 1903, the first number of a new journal, the Daily Mirror, designed, he explained in a "reflection" published over his own signature, to provide a record of the activities and ambitions of women—in addition to the news of the day. The early Daily Mirror for women was largely written by women. The price was one penny. Thousands of pounds were lost upon it before Harmsworth decided that the Daily Mirror would appeal to men if it printed photographs. The first picture paper was liked equally by men and women. The price was reduced to a halfpenny on January 28, 1904, and the Daily Illustrated

Mirror then turned the corner. By the spring the new paper began to make a profit—but not before Harmsworth had lost £100,000. Those who had noted how he had turned what had almost become a major disaster into a notable success awaited with curiosity the results which Pearson was to achieve with the Daily Express and the Standard.

While men looked on they saw that Harmsworth's chastening experiences of 1904 did not dissuade him from expansion in other directions. The Overseas Mail, founded in 1904, was followed by the Continental Daily Mail in 1905. In the same year he secured the Observer and confirmed that he possessed more than a mere commercial sense by appointing, after one or two experiments, Mr. J. L. Garvin as his editor and managing partner. These operations required a further reorganization of financial structures. The Evening News, Daily Mail and Weekly Dispatch were grouped as a single property owned by Associated Newspapers, Limited. The new company was registered in April, 1905: its capital was £1,600,000 and the chairman was Alfred Harmsworth. He was now recognized by the Free Trade Conservative Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour, whose boast it was that he never read newspapers, as the leader of the industry. On August 23, 1904, upon his recommendation, Harmsworth, the anti "stomach-tax" campaigner, was created a Baronet.1

Ten years had elapsed since Arthur Walter became head of Printing House Square, "an institution," he wrote in 1899 to a disappointed proprietor, "which has not, and never had, its parallel in the history of the world." Vast as the changes had been in the outside world of journalism, no changes had been permitted in the editorial character of The Times, or were likely; the paper remained as it had been left by John Walter III. No change had occurred in the trend of the circulation or of the dividend; both steadily decreased. To critics in the Proprietary Walter still contended that "all that can be done at present or in the near future is to do the best we can on the old lines." The "new lines," it was implied, were those of Sir Alfred Harmsworth, Bt. His methods certainly continued to be new. Of all his assets the greatest was the tirelessness of his search for new writers with new ideas and new methods of expressing them. His experience in the magazine business convinced him that journalistic success depended upon the ability to collect men able, under his direction, to write profitably for him. The first anniversary number of the Daily Mail paid tribute to "the unsparing thought and labour of a very able and devoted band of young workers."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A table of the proprietors and editors of the London morning and evening journals from 1785 to 1945 will be printed in the Appendix to Vol. IV which concludes the present work.

Some of the older writers and journalists, also, were quick to see that the Daily Mail was the newspaper of the day and Stead himself was glad to write regularly for it before and after his failure in 1904 to establish his own Daily Paper. The Westminster Gazette, subsidized by Newnes, continued the "cultivated" traditions in the evenings. Whether the morning Standard, under Pearson, could be redesigned without competing with the same owner's Daily Express; whether he would merge the two morning papers as he had merged the St. James's with the Evening Standard or whether he could make the morning Standard pay at a penny without its being redesigned on "new lines" was yet to be seen.

Walter's "old lines" of course were those he had, as a boy, taken for granted at Bear Wood. He, too, wished to be responsible for producing the best possible newspaper; he, too, thought the best class of Englishman would wish to read and subscribe to it whether or not at three times the price of the Standard and six times that of the Daily Mail and the Daily Express. Such a paper should contain as much news as possible; it should be written and printed accurately throughout; it should contain ample and exact Parliamentary, legal, academic, ecclesiastical and other reports, sound critical notices of theatrical and artistic events, full obituaries and independent foreign dispatches sent by expert correspondents, together with leading articles written in correct English, expressing the paper's political standpoint. Whether the provision of such a newspaper was "journalism" as understood by Alfred Harmsworth or by Cyril Arthur Pearson was not considered.

It had been John Walter III's notion of journalism from 1847 to 1894 and it was also his son's. Two things were obvious: there was much in common between the halfpenny Daily Mail and the halfpenny Daily Express; there was nothing in common between either of them and The Times, price threepence, which, under the fourth Walter, was being edited by Buckle upon the "old lines." The fourth Walter would not have remodelled it, or allowed Bell or Buckle to do so. It was an article of faith, too, with Bell that The Times must not cease to be The Times. He required new capital and was prepared to adopt new measures to secure it, but he rejected and would reject all offers upon terms that would jeopardize the standards of the paper. But both Walter and Bell were aware that the paper, in certain departments at least, needed re-planning.

# VI

## A FOREIGN DEPARTMENT UNDER WALLACE

given to foreign affairs in general was increasingly influenced by Blowitz. He had come to *The Times* on the recommendation of Thiers in 1871 and, after four years as assistant, succeeded to the post of Paris Correspondent. His inexhaustible fluency enabled him to write dogmatically on all subjects, all men, all countries, and all events, including some events that never happened. In the course of time his curiosity outstripped his sense of accuracy and his personal vanity his sense of discretion. His dispatches were deeply impressed with his individuality, he was by turns sentimental and sensational, displaying all the arts of the showman, now mysterious, now omniscient. Unlike his colleagues, he loved to write as one human being to be read by other human beings.

Even in its palmiest days popular journalism never produced a more brilliant master. Blowitz also had more serious claims. He possessed a thorough understanding of the internal politics of France. In the original plan for the Cambridge Modern History Lord Acton allocated to him the chapters on the Third Republic, and it is to be regretted that he never wrote them, just as it is to be regretted that Donald Mackenzie Wallace, who was Blowitz's assistant at the Congress of Berlin, did not write his chapters on Modern Russia. The two men were absolutely dissimilar writers. Accuracy and impartiality were Wallace's idols, while Blowitz respected neither. Colour fascinated him. Lacking convictions of his own, he inclined to adopt those of one party or another, and, over all, he felt the temptation to study his audience and their wishes. Herein lay the secret of his method as a journalist. If Blowitz was so often first with the news, it was not due simply to the unscrupulousness of his methods, but their resourcefulness. He was unrivalled in his day for appreciation of speed and journalistic tactics. Blowitz never wasted discretion upon news that could be obtained without it. He knew how to secure confidences; he ever had something to give in exchange for news. He got it from everywhere. Blowitz,

it is necessary to emphasize, regarded Paris as a vantage point for observing not France only but the whole of Europe. Blowitz's wide surveys were a regular feature in *The Times*. The material upon which they were based came from a network of friends in all European Capitals to whom he was in the habit of sending bits of news.

Blowitz, in effect, conducted a news exchange of his own. The danger of such an arrangement was that Blowitz could not verify what his friends told him and the office could not be sure whether Blowitz's news was accurate or not, nor whether the motives of his friends, and the effects they sought to produce, were in the interests of British policy. Only in a few instances are the names of the correspondent's friends known. On December 30, 1886, Blowitz published "a letter from St. Petersburg, from an unquestionable source," which stated that "a direct alliance between Germany and Russia was signed a fortnight ago." There seems to have been no foundation for this assertion; the famous "Reinsurance Treaty," which Bismarck made with Russia, was concluded in June, 1887. But in the previous December the Russians were trying to get Bismarck to use his influence in their favour in Vienna, and the Chancellor was having a very difficult time holding the balance between Austria-Hungary and Russia. The Manager's letterbooks prove the startling news which Blowitz "revealed" at this time to have come not from St. Petersburg at all, but from the Russian Ambassador in Berlin, Count Paul Schuvaloff.1

At the death of Chenery Blowitz was without a rival. From 1884 to 1891, acting from Paris, he was a substitute for what Arthur Walter and Moberly Bell were planning: a Foreign Department in P.H.S. He possessed the liberty to publish statements about any and every aspect of European politics, and his views were regularly supported in leading articles. When his judgment was departed from he felt justified in complaining. He was, moreover, consulted when difficulties arose in the choice of representatives abroad. It is not to be wondered at that Blowitz was regarded in Europe as responsible for the foreign policy of *The Times*. Such was the view of Bismarck; such was the view Blowitz quietly propagated. The German Chancellor's dislike of Blowitz was intense, not simply on account of differences in policy but on account of differences in temperament. The correspondent's vanity was too much for the Chancellor. Blowitz

<sup>1</sup> This appears from MacDonald's letter in M. 20/866.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Blowitz to A. F. Walter, October 16, 1891. (Walter Papers.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> There is for example the interesting correspondence between Blowitz and A. F. Walter on the question of the Berlin Office, c. 1890. (Walter Papers.)

#### SUPREMACY OF BLOWITZ

was for ever recurring to the old story of how he met Bismarck in 1878. He regarded himself and the Chancellor as by far the most important people in Europe and he made a habit of writing as if his intimacy with Bismarck was constant. And when in 1881, there were stories of secret meetings between Gambetta and Bismarck, Blowitz stepped in again with reminiscences. "Let me recall once more," he wrote on January 14, 1887, "what Prince Bismarck said to me in 1878."

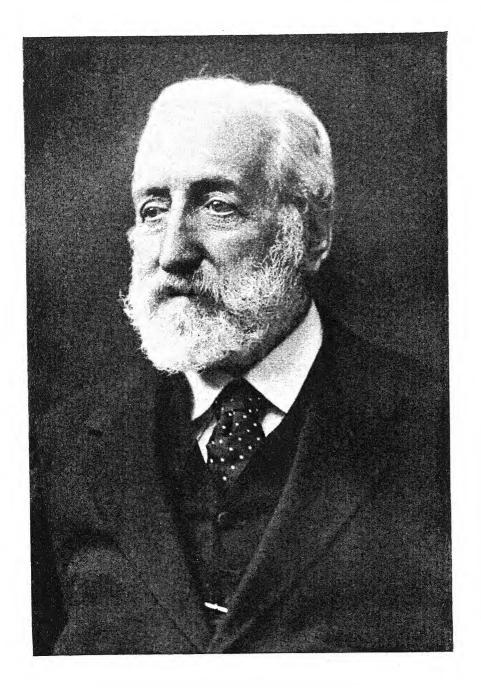
There is no doubt of what the Bismarcks, father and son, thought of Blowitz and of his influence over The Times. On October 5, 1884, Count Herbert Bismarck complained that "Above all The Times, inspired as it was throughout by Blowitz, was making every effort to irritate France against Germany."1 Later in the same year, Prince Bismarck informed Münster that "I have never counted Blowitz, a Bohemian, whose detailed and aggressive article on November 17th will have been noticed by you, as an English writer, but rather as a Frenchman, and I look on his article as voicing the French eagerness to sow suspicion in England against the policy of Germany."<sup>2</sup> In 1885 Count Herbert explained to his father that he had done his best to warn Cabinet Ministers in England of the harm done by The Times, which was the only paper taken in by newspaper offices, clubs, hotels, &c. " . . . These gentlemen heartily agreed with my exposition and promised to do their utmost to induce The Times to cease opening its columns in future to its correspondents uncontrolled."3 Nevertheless, in May, 1885, Bismarck was again pointing out (this time to the Emperor) how in his opinion the anti-German attitude of The Times was a step towards an alliance between Great Britain, France and Russia against Germany. "This is the policy urged by the French, and especially the Orleanist papers,"4 and Blowitz, it has been seen, had Orleanist connexions.

In 1885 MacDonald brought Blowitz and the Cairo Correspondent, Moberly Bell, together at dinner, and in the same year the ageing Chief, John Walter III, then 67, went to Egypt and saw the country under Bell's guidance. When MacDonald died in 1889 Blowitz's influence diminished.<sup>5</sup> It lessened increasingly as the result of Arthur Walter's policy, which became apparent

<sup>1</sup> October 5, 1884; Dugdale I, 186, from G.P. IV, 88-91.
2 December 5, 1884; Dugdale I, 187, from G.P. IV, 91.
3 March 7 (misprinted 3 in Dugdale), 1885; G.P. IV, 101.
4 May 27, 1885; G.P. IV, 124-6. The friction between Bismarck and Blowitz is chronicled in Appendix VI, p. 785.
5 But as late as 1899 Count Münster, principal German Delegate at the Hague Peace Conference, complained to the present John Walter (1873-) of the baleful influence of Blowitz's correspondence on Apple German relations Blowitz's correspondence on Anglo-German relations.

soon after his appointment as Manager when his father reached the age of 71. The old Chief, however, even then continued to conduct correspondence regarding foreign affairs with members of the Staff, notably with Mackenzie Wallace.

Foremost among the tasks shouldered by Bell on taking up the appointment in 1890 to assist Arthur Walter was the re-planning of the foreign news service. There were good men on the foreign staff but in the wake of the depression that followed the losses in income and prestige, MacDonald had been unable either to maintain the department at customary strength or to train them to discharge their duties in a style that suited contemporary needs. The fame won for The Times by Frank Power's messages from Khartoum in 1884-1885 was buried among the controversies over Parnellism. No such able recruits had since offered their services. By 1890, the foreign correspondence had become far from satisfactory either in comparison with the standards of the paper's own past, or with those of its present competitors. The Standard, the Morning Post, or the Daily Telegraph were often equal to and sometimes superior to The Times in news and comment. Even the internal routine was out of date. The responsibility within the office regarding the securing of foreign news, the assessment of the influence of such news upon world affairs had, in the days of Delane, been divided between the Editor and the Manager. The system survived Chenery, notwithstanding that his personal interest in the details of foreign politics surpassed that of Delane. For more than a generation Bell's predecessor, in supervising the financial side of the foreign news service, maintained the only regular communication with the office that the correspondents enjoyed. Such a routine led the Manager naturally to discuss affairs with the correspondents and to give them political direction. In so doing the Manager acted in general consultation with the Editor who, as a matter of course, preserved authority over the leader writers and daily and directly exercised it. But since Barnes the Editor's authority over the foreign correspondents had been indirect. The managerial responsibility became still wider when the youthful Buckle succeeded Chenery and from 1884 the Manager's control and direction of the foreign service became a feature of the constitution that lasted until Bell's death. Hence, if after 1884 the old division of functions, as between the editorial and managerial departments, may be said to have survived in practice, the Manager played the larger, more active and in fact, as time proceeded, paramount part in the conduct of the paper's imperial and foreign policy.



DONALD MACKENZIE WALLACE

## A NEW "SPECIALIST" REQUIRED

It was the new Assistant Manager's conviction that contemporary standards required "the employment of specialists and experts." Brilliant personal journalism of the Blowitz type was out of date. The foreign correspondent of the future needed to be well grounded in the facts of economics and politics, and in closer contact with the office than he had been. It followed that in the whole position in which Bell found himself, it was no longer practicable for the Manager, in fairness to his other pressing responsibilities, to undertake personally the regular guidance of the foreign correspondents. Equally it was out of the question for the Editor to bear the burden of such a correspondence. A separate department to deal with foreign affairs in all their aspects was seen to be needed. Bell proposed to secure as head of this new department the most experienced correspondent available. Walter agreed. The new "specialist's" duties would be concerned solely with collecting the material. chiefly political, but often economic, upon which the foreign policy of the paper would be built up. The Editor would, of course, take responsibility for all that was printed in The Times. The new department, however, was established under the pressure of the management: it could hardly have been otherwise. But the Editor did not like Bell's theory and only accepted it on condition that he approved the choice of the man for the new appointment, and that the editorial control over the leading articles was not diminished. Bell was glad to agree, for it was not part of his design that the "specialist" should, normally at any rate, write leading articles. This would leave intact the essentials of the Editor's position.

It would remain the Manager's responsibility to make appointments or transfers, to fix salaries and apportion expenses. His correspondence would be limited to these subjects. practice, Bell found it agreeable, also, to maintain personal relations with certain correspondents. For example, with those at Paris, Berlin, Rome and Vienna, he conducted a correspondence that regularly touched upon political subjects in which he happened to be interested. The Manager was in the position to follow his own taste and to entertain on a scale that brought him into touch with ministers, diplomats and political personages, and he frequently posted direct to correspondents information of interest to them that came his way. But this intercourse was incidental to his position, and any communication he had with chosen correspondents was spasmodic. The "specialist" was designed to be the normal channel and so remained. Bell's curiosity regarding politics remained an asset when the "specialist" was on holiday or abroad.

The new constitution of the Foreign Department thus decided. the man for the post had to be searched for. Bell believed that a change was urgently required at Berlin and shortly at Paris. The Times correspondent in Berlin when Bell became Manager was Charles Lowe. He had held the post for more than ten years, but his tenure was not distinguished. The political atmosphere of the post-Bismarckian period made a change desirable. Bell's own appointment and his reorganization of the Foreign Department occurred simultaneously with changes of importance in the German Government, the immensity of which was not yet appreciated. But while it was clear that in the future the Berlin post would call for a correspondent with great critical acumen, the determination to drop Lowe in favour of a new man arose purely from considerations of journalistic quality; and, if politics entered into it, a vague premonition that Anglo-German relations were to be of greater delicacy in the future than in the past. There were thus two first class appointments to be filled; that of the head of the department and of the correspondent at Berlin. In 1890 the Berlin post was offered to Wallace, then in Constantinople. But Wallace declined. Alluding to his existing situation under Lord Dufferin he wrote, "My present occupation is thoroughly confidential, whereas ordinary journalistic work—the necessity of being constantly on the qui vive and chronicling regularly all the little events of the day -is a kind of work for which I am not specially fitted."1 Wallace's refusal of Berlin and his outstanding qualifications for London led soon afterwards to his consideration for the new post.

Wallace was barely fifty when Moberly Bell urged him in 1891 to rejoin, but as "Head of the Foreign Department," the staff of *The Times*. He had been one of its most valued members until the British Ambassador at Constantinople, Lord Dufferin, was appointed Viceroy of India in 1884 and prevailed upon Wallace to go with him. Yet, though he was not elderly, there was about Wallace an air of mature authority beyond his actual years. His learning was founded on studies at five Universities. Since he left Boghead, Dumbartonshire, he had read at Glasgow, Edinburgh, Berlin, Heidelberg, and Paris. His services in India had brought him a K.C.I.E. Grey-bearded, deep-chested and sturdy, an imperturbable calm matched his solid strength. It was a formidable figure that Bell sought to bring into Printing House Square.

Wallace was a diplomat rather than a journalist; and a student rather than either. Affairs interested his intelligence and he

<sup>1</sup> Wallace to John Walter, June 9, 1890. (Walter Papers.)

#### THE APPOINTMENT OF WALLACE

hated to be hurried by the Press into the premature expression of his views. For a man so intimate with journalism he was curiously unaffected by it. It was in 1877 that MacDonald, upon the advice of Stebbing, had sent him to St. Petersburg as "Our Own." In the following year he served at the Congress of Berlin as assistant to Blowitz and it was in the linings of Wallace's coat that the treaty was sewn on the night journey from Berlin, via Cologne, to Brussels whence he wired the text. But he suspected "scoops" and sensations. Wallace's mind carefully distinguished between an impression, an opinion, a view and a conviction; he was scrupulous in his devotion to accurate statement and transmission. He kept up his Pitman's shorthand to the end of his life. His languages were unusually sound and he wrote Cyrillic like a born Russian.

After the Congress Wallace was ordered to Constantinople, a Capital which he later acclaimed as the best school in Europe for the study of diplomacy. Certainly his own term at the Turkish Capital was in the highest degree important to Wallace's career. In the first place it brought him into contact with the British Ambassador at Constantinople in 1881, and the two men were quickly joined in close friendship. For twenty years there was no figure in international politics or diplomacy with whom Wallace was more intimate than with Lord Dufferin. Secondly. his Constantinople term completed Wallace's education in the Eastern Question. His Russian visits had already taught him the importance of the aims of the Panslavists, enabled him to judge the temper of the Russian Government and to assess the feelings of the people. With Aksakoff, the Panslav prophet, he was on the friendliest terms; with the sinister side of Ignatieff he was well acquainted; also he was acquainted with many revolutionaries. He thought Aksakoff extravagant, and had little fear of the realization of Panslav dreams in the Balkans, and so thought that the Bulgarian unity which Disraeli had gone to extremes to avert was both inevitable and unobjectionable. His experiences in Turkey brought Wallace to the conclusion that the Ottoman Empire was doomed and that the old British policy of bolstering it up by forcing reforms upon the Sultan was futile. This was the basic contention of the new school: nothing could remedy the Turkish situation. The Empire would dissolve because it must. Wallace's observation, and revelation, of Turkish misrule put his personal safety into jeopardy; but as both the British and the Russian Ambassadors united to protect him the Porte did not dare to order his expulsion. Naturally, the gospel that

<sup>1</sup> See Volume II, p. 526.

Wallace began to preach was highly appreciated by Walter, MacDonald and others who represented the Russophile school in P.H.S. in distinction from the older Turcophile view which had persisted since the Crimean War.<sup>1</sup>

Towards the end of 1882 the future Head of the Foreign Department (there was much discussion and delay over the title to be given to Wallace's position) again broadened his experience. Lord Dufferin, the Ambassador, requested his services on a special mission to Egypt. This expedition, taken in the form of a holiday, enabled him to write for *The Times* articles supplementing those forwarded by the accredited Cairo Correspondent, C. F. Moberly Bell, whom he then met for the first time. The permanent achievement of this "holiday" was a book entitled Egypt and the Egyptian Question which took its place besides Dufferin's report as an elucidation of Great Britain's task in Egypt.

When he made up his mind to accept Bell's offer to head the Foreign Department he brought into it the revolutionary outlook of a man in possession of a profound understanding of the deepest issues of foreign politics and of a close personal acquaintance with the statesmen who personified them.

Wallace had two main tasks—to create the department itself and to train its staff at home and abroad into an efficient team. In the office he found no Intelligence Department, no library, few works of reference, no up-to-date Index and no cutting-books. Diligently he began to organize them. To correspondents abroad he was a firm and wise mentor. If, at 2 a.m., after a night's work. he wrote them terse instructions, or comment on their messages, in what he called "tart notes," his acid was never corrosive. He wanted news, facts and ideas, not essays on everything in general and nothing in particular. Where praise was due he gave it. Two lines from him meant more to correspondents than a page from others. He insisted that they should adopt towards the Governments to which they were accredited (he was accustomed to use the phrase) the attitude of diplomatic envoys. Their duty was not to obtain news for sensational publication but to put themselves into intimate relations with ministers, to ascertain the policy of Governments and the opinions of influential persons, and to report, as much confidentially for his own private guidance as publicly, for the benefit of the readers of The Times. In the use of material he took into account, first, the diplomatic effect of a telegram and, secondly, its value as news. Wallace, nevertheless, would instantly rebuke a correspondent who sought to rise from

<sup>1</sup> For the policy of the paper towards Russia in Asia see Chapter VIII.

#### DONALD MACKENZIE WALLACE

the position of passive chronicler to that of actor in events; nothing was more absurd, he thought, than a journalist's adoption of the role of being a power behind the scenes. As a correspondent, he had himself been accustomed fearlessly to expose abuses and he gave unstinted support to any subordinate in difficulties for doing the same. But in fairness to all Governments he demanded that *The Times* should always avoid interfering in the internal affairs of foreign countries, should train its correspondents to maintain strict neutrality among parties, and should never enrol themselves for or against particular persons. The new spirit inevitably encountered difficulties.

Wallace, indeed, possessed an unrivalled connexion with statesmen and diplomats of every country; with some he was on intimate terms of friendship. No member of the staff, before or since his time, had so extensive an acquaintance with crowned heads. Because he was careful to keep up personal relations with exalted quarters, and not to lose touch with "Society" in London and foreign Capitals, the impression was created among the staff that he was a tuft-hunter or a "courtier," but Wallace could "walk with Kings nor lose the common touch." For "official fictions" of any kind he had little respect. Nor were his later appointments to positions at Court by King Edward VII and King George V more than evidence of the wish of those Sovereigns to have about them a man whose sound, painstaking counsel they could trust. First impressions of Wallace's supposed snobbery did not long survive. His colleagues soon discovered that much twinkling humour and unobtrusive kindliness could lie beneath the dour exterior of a Dumbartonshire Scot. They recognized him as a journalist among journalists, a lover who had come back to his first love, which had issued in his triumph with Blowitz at the Berlin Congress of 1878. His official glories—as private secretary and confidential adviser to two Viceroys of India, and as political officer who had been in charge of the Czarevitch's journey through India and Ceylon-sat lightly on him. Not of these things would he speak to his colleagues. But now and again "in the morning calm that follows the midnight stress" he would tell with a quiet chuckle, between puffs from a majestic pipe, how he once drank under the table the officers of a crack regiment of the Russian Guards who had tried to drink him under the table and who marvelled on the morrow at the clearness of his Scottish head

Wallace's intellectual ability to draft the theory of a foreign department worthy of *The Times* was never in doubt. His experience guaranteed that his programme of reform would be

practicable if carried out. His sense of tact made no less sure that he would work as an acceptable colleague to Buckle. But the Editor was "not very keen about it," reported Wallace to Bell, "the only suggestion he had to make was that I should be much more useful if I could learn to write leaders quickly." At this point in the conversation Wallace put his hand in his pocket and gave Buckle a leader on the insurrection in the Yemen and it appeared on October 12, 1891. For his part Wallace was willing, rather than anxious, to write leaders. In his view the collection of facts was a prior necessity. Any leader-writer, provided he was sufficiently instructed and a good writer, could be relied upon to do justice to the subject. The matter was amicably arranged, and the permanent relations between the new department and the Editor were left to find, through experience, their own means of regulation. But it was not destined to be the case in Wallace's time, or in his successor's, that the Editor and the Foreign Assistant were to be united in their outlook upon world affairs. Wallace, however, accepted the post with the title, not of "Head of the Foreign Department," but of Foreign Assistant Editor, 1 on November 1, 1891, at the high salary of £1,950 a year.

The change of title suited Buckle but did not alter the facts. Wallace was the foreign "specialist" and directed the department. His information was regularly better or at least earlier than that of the Foreign Office. Although, in contrast to MacDonald, he was at all times anxious to work in conjunction with the Foreign Office he always resisted any attempt that might be made to use the organization of The Times as a supplement or substitute for diplomatic negotiation. "Our Foreign Office," he wrote in 1894 to Stillman, the correspondent in Rome, "has a strong objection to unofficial diplomacy. Though I know Rosebery pretty intimately, I am always most careful in avoiding anything like interference."2 In his view the sole correct medium for exercising the influence of The Times was through the columns of the paper. In selecting matter for publication he had in mind rather its effect upon statesmen. British and foreign, than its effect upon the world at large. It was only on occasions that Wallace was prepared to step into the arena and directly modify the course of events. His mind was too scrupulously interested in amassing details which were ever, in his view, insufficient to permit him to champion causes. He was more of a contemplative than a propagandist and was as much interested in the past as in the present. He was far

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In the international circumstances described in Chapter VIII, p. 185. <sup>2</sup> Wallace to Stillman, January 29, 1894. (F. 2/340.)

## WALLACE'S POLICY

less excited by the event and its practical consequences than in the discovery of its origins. In consequence he was more a pupil than a teacher, less ready to expound a system than to urge a method of inquiry. With a mind thus detached from passion, Wallace was able to understand and even sympathize with policies which were hostile to British interests. As an individual, his detachment prevented his acceptance of the position of the average British subject, to whom a foreign country's policy was only good when it favoured England. As director of the foreign policy of *The Times* he nevertheless sought first the good of his own country.

In general Wallace was a conservative in foreign policy. He supported combinations which tended to stabilize the world and made for peace; but he knew changes to be inevitable, and his own period in the Foreign Department at Printing House Square was a restless time. His approach differed strikingly from that of his successor or of Moberly Bell, both of whom were supporters of a positive programme and found the consummation of their lives not in observation but in the active promotion of imperial ends. Chirol was fundamentally dissatisfied with Lord Salisbury's cautious policy. He favoured a go-ahead policy in all quarters of the globe and judged other nations from an essentially insular point of view. Wallace often found himself much more on the side of the aged Prime Minister than on that of the prophets of the future. Yet he was quick to see the tendencies of the times and was an early supporter of friendship with Russia and with France; as time went on he became increasingly suspicious of Germany, but, at the same time, acted as a brake upon the growing hostility to German policy.

It has been seen that for upwards of ten years before Wallace's appointment the comments of The Times on foreign affairs had been dominated by Blowitz. To MacDonald, who was apt to say that diplomacy had many of the qualities of comic opera, the peculiar qualities of the Paris Correspondent seemed in place. The Manager, like the Chief Proprietor, regarded him as the ablest of all contemporary Foreign Correspondents, and in the late eighties he held a unique position on the staff. His intimacy with the Walters enabled him to do what no other correspondent had been allowed to do, to dramatize himself everywhere, and in France. Germany and Italy to personify The Times. From Paris Blowitz had been permitted to survey the whole of European diplomacy, to draw at will upon sources unrevealed to the Editor in Berlin. Rome, Vienna and St. Petersburg and elsewhere, to publish interviews authorized and unauthorized, real and fictitious, and to do all without a word to the accredited correspondents of

those Capitals. Finally, Blowitz was accustomed to count upon support for his policy in leading articles. It was an essential to Wallace's conception of his task as head of the Foreign Department to put an end to this. He was in a position to check Blowitz's statements, with the result that he frequently found them baseless.

Thus Wallace's appointment carried with it the deposition of Blowitz from his position as the leading authority on foreign affairs. Instead, he now found himself subordinated to a man with views totally different from his own. A conflict was bound to take place between two men so different in their outlooks: nor could there be any doubt as to the victor. Ironically enough when Blowitz was informed of Wallace's appointment, he expressed his hearty satisfaction. Blowitz was under the impression that he knew his former assistant too well for any misunderstanding to occur. He had recently been annoyed at the tone of certain leading articles and now looked forward to being better able to control foreign policy under Wallace's régime for, as he pointed out, he could talk to him on the telephone. 1 It was a rude awakening that Wallace should decline such conversations and Blowitz began to realize that Wallace preferred accurate news, even if it came late, to "beats" which were half true. Wallace's dislike for Blowitz's sensationalism soon became evident. When Lord Lytton, then Ambassador in Paris, died, Blowitz achieved a characteristic coup: he interviewed the widow in the very death-chamber and Blowitz was both humiliated and exasperated when Wallace excluded it on the ground that "that curious psychological entity called the British public would be shocked at the idea."2 On another occasion, Wallace rated Blowitz's account of a Serbian disturbance as "a jeu d'esprit of questionable taste, which might have appeared in the Figaro rather than The Times."3

A more striking example of the contrast between the old and the new methods occurred in 1899. When Queen Victoria was so indiscreet as to send a telegram en clair to the Paris Embassy, expressing her horror at the verdict against Dreyfus, Blowitz managed to get hold of the text and triumphantly sent it to The Times. But Printing House Square would not have it. True.

<sup>1</sup> Blowitz to A. F. Walter, October 16, 1891: "I think that what concerns Paris, Sir M. W. and myself, we may, in given circumstances, make use of the telephone—because in five minutes' talk you can exchange practically more ideas than during hours of writing." (Walter Papers.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Wallace to Blowitz, November 26, 1891. (F. 1/28.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Wallace to Lavino, June 19, 1893. This letter, like the many others to which no specific number or location is appended, is filed in a large box temporarily marked A.

## WALLACE'S METHOD

it was bound to leak out in Paris (as indeed it did), but "what we felt we could not do was to take the initiative of giving publicity to a private communication from the Queen." If the correspondent's remarkable coup may be admired, it is even more remarkable that after thirty years Blowitz still had to learn that it was not for *The Times* to indulge in such triumphs. In addition to restraining Blowitz's sensationalism, it was necessary for Wallace to abridge his extraterritorial zeal. Wallace set about this at once, using to begin with gentle and persuasive methods. He thanked Blowitz for his very valuable information secured from all parts of the world but asked him to respect the sensitiveness of the man on the spot.<sup>2</sup>

Wallace proceeded to insist that Blowitz should always reveal to him the sources of his information. When the reply was unsatisfactory, the dispatch remained unpublished. Blowitz regularly complained of "the premeditation with which my informations are cancelled" and of "the brutality of the alterations in my telegrams,"3 but Wallace's blue pencil continued to revise and reduce his dispatches. In 1892, Wallace with unwonted candour, for he was not habitually frank in correspondence, told Blowitz that "we are for the moment regarded in certain well-informed quarters as rather too credulous with regard to reported mysterious negotiations."4 This reproach, Wallace was determined, should not be levelled against The Times when he was there to throw much of Blowitz's information into the waste-paper basket. The discarding, when it occurred, was due in part, as has been seen, to a contrasting attitude towards the function of journalism; but even when a Blowitz dispatch complied with Wallace's standard of composition it was tested for discretion. Wallace, although never subservient to the Foreign Office and indeed sometimes very independent, ever tended to take a "diplomatic" view of the function of The Times. An interesting example of the contrast between the journalist, whose mere thought was publicity, and the diplomat, who thought always of the effect of publicity upon policy, occurs in Wallace's correspondence of 1893.

I may tell you between ourselves that we had a leader written on the decision twenty-four hours before your telegram arrived, but we considered it more "correct" (in the diplomatic sense) to await the official announcement. For reasons which I need not explain to so

<sup>2</sup> Wallace to Blowitz, January 5, 1892. (F. 1/110.)

<sup>4</sup> January 13, 1892. (F. 1/117.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The office to Blowitz, September 27, 1899. (F. 4/448.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Blowitz to Bell, March 30, 1898, and November 5, 1901. (P.H.S. Papers.)

experienced a journalist, a considerable portion of our most precious wares are never put into the shop window at all.<sup>1</sup>

As Wallace well knew, this was precisely what could never be understood by one so long accustomed not only to put all his wares in the window and mount them to best advantage, but also to put himself in as well. This last propensity, in anybody else an absolute defect from the view-point of *The Times*, had been borne with great patience by MacDonald. Wallace however came down upon it heavily. In 1893 Blowitz's reminiscences of his work for *The Times* appeared in a signed article written for a London review. The article incorporated further "revelations" about Bismarck and Holstein, which gravely inconvenienced other members of the foreign staff. Wallace thus sympathized with a colleague:

It is hardly necessary to say that I am extremely annoyed and indignant at Blowitz's article in the *Contemporary*, which is characteristic of his vanity and venom. Since I have been here he has not been allowed to disport his little personality in the columns of *The Times*, and as he cannot live without notoriety he has thrown himself into the magazines, but I have now taken means of checkmating him there also. You may feel inclined to say that I am locking the stable door when the steed has been stolen, and I feel there is some justice in the remark, but I act on the principle of "better late than never," and I think I do well because there are other steeds in the stable."<sup>2</sup>

The action taken was explained in a second letter to a member of the staff: "Arthur Walter wrote a tremendously strong letter, censuring B. severely for having published such an article and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> August 16, 1893. (F. 1/980.)

<sup>2</sup> February 8, 1893. (F. 1/800.) In 1874, Baron Holstein, then second Secretary to the German Embassy at Paris, had got into a scrape owing to his intervention between Count Arnim and Bismarck. A campaign was opened in the French Press against Baron Holstein, and Blowitz alleged that he was induced by representations from the German Embassy to undertake his defence. On January 8, 1875, Blowitz alleges, the Baron called upon him, thanked him warmly, and said that with his courageous intervention he had made his stay in Paris possible. M. de Blowitz, opening his heart to his visitor, told him that he was at the moment in doubt whether or not he would be appointed as Paris Correspondent of The Times, as he was then in a critical situation. Imagine, therefore, his amazement when, as Blowitz writes, "on January 16th—a friendly hand sent me a letter of Baron Holstein, sixteen octavo pages in length, bearing the superscription: 'Kaiserliche Deutsche Botschaft in Frankreich,' and entirely written and signed by the Baron's hand. It was addressed to one of the most intimate friends of Mr. John Delane, editor of The Times, and denounced me as quite under the thumb of the Duc Decazes, and as willingly ignoring and concealing from my readers an Orleanist plot which was preparing a coup d'etat. In this letter The Times was urged to send to Paris some clever and impartial person, to keep the paper au courant of what was here going on underneath, as well as on the surface. This letter, I repeat, reached me on January 16th, a week after Baron Holstein's visit of gratitude, and it had been sent on the 12th! I need not say that I have carefully preserved this curious and instructive document now for almost eighteen years, and if I divulge it to-day, it is because it is so appropriate in these pages, showing, as it does, with what stoicism a diplomatist bent upon his duty rids himself of a weight of gratitude when he thinks that he ought to do so in the interests of a higher cause."



HENRI STEFAN OPPER DE BLOWITZ
From a Miniature painted by Miss Winifred Hope Thomson

#### DECLINE OF BLOWITZ

informing him that for the future no articles are to be published by him until they are submitted for approval." The rebuke from Walter, severe and unwelcome as it was, hardly affected the Bohemian's spirits. What depressed him most was the continuing surveillance of P.H.S. Blowitz could not work with zest as long as there was in the office a man who could cap a dispatch with the comment that he could "add a few words to the letter from your St. Petersburg friend, which you have sent us to-night. It is a mistake to suppose that the Czar never sees Ambassadors. How often he sees them depends on his personal liking for them. The German Ambassador, for example, who is peculiarly favoured in this respect, lunches with His Majesty almost every Wednesday and is occasionally invited in the evening."

If it was gall to Blowitz to be read such a lesson by his former assistant, it must have been wormwood to the old dictator of foreign policy to receive such dispassionate words of advice as the following:

Your great journalistic talent is universally known and no one is more ready to recognize and admire it than I am, but it is, unfortunately for us, of a peculiar kind which does not easily accommodate itself to the requirements of that anonymous journalism of which *The Times* is the great representative, and in which each worker strives to sink his own personality in the collective personality of the Paper.

Nor could Blowitz be expected to understand what was suitable for the British public, with its "unconscious canons of taste." Wallace, however, understood it and much more.

If the credit of Wallace's original appointment as a Foreign Correspondent in 1877 goes to Delane and Stebbing, that of his appointment as the Foreign Assistant Editor or head of the Foreign Department, 1891, goes to Walter and Bell. He was himself the most significant of all the foreign specialists on the staff of *The Times* and his own appointments were also significant. In the interval between Wallace's refusal of the Berlin Correspondentship and his acceptance of the direction of the Foreign Department, it fell to Bell to make arrangements regarding the Berlin vacancy. In the end the post was offered to and accepted by James Brinsley Richards, who had for some six years been a very satisfactory representative of the paper at Vienna. Bell's instructions to Richards on the treatment of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> February 13, 1893. (F. 1/815.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Wallace to Blowitz, June 14, 1893. (F. 1/876.)

<sup>3</sup> Wallace to Blowitz, September 27, 1895. (F. 3/156.)

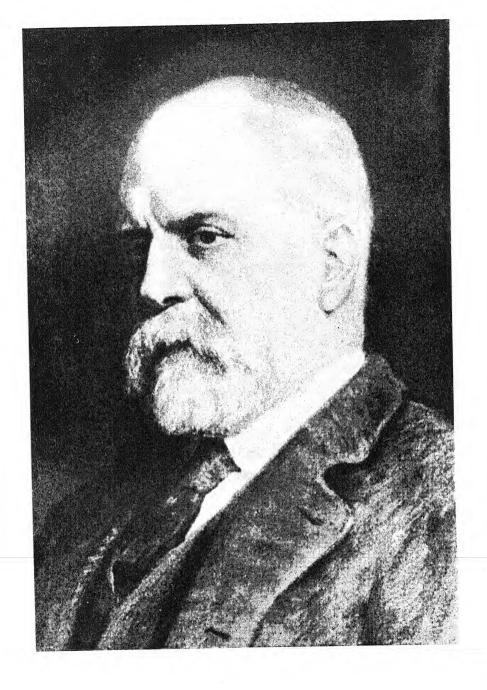
German politics were general but pointed: "I would caution you against any but the most careful and judicious treatment of them. . . . You must be careful to avoid giving offence (so far as possible) in any criticisms you may have to pass on that problematical person the King-Emperor. Above all, let it be manifest that your remarks are temperate and temperately thought out and not the result of momentary irritation or excitement. You have a difficult task to follow Lowe, but you must try and increase the reputation of *The Times* correspondent, perhaps I ought to say to *create* it." On January 1, 1892, and in this spirit Richards, after a considerable delay, entered upon his responsibility. On April 5 he died.

The choice among the existing staff was now seen to be very difficult. William Lavino, on the recommendation of Rosebery, had been appointed in January, 1892, to succeed Richards at Vienna. When Richards suddenly died, Bell proposed to transfer Lavino to Berlin and send a new man to Vienna, at that time regarded diplomatically as the more important Capital. Lavino had been residing in Vienna since 1878 (when he was correspondent of the Daily Telegraph), and it was undeniable that there was much to be said for the plan of sending a man of his experience, tact and discretion to Berlin. But, in the meantime, Wallace had accepted the Directorship of the Foreign Department. He needed to be consulted; and he had other ideas. It was resolved to retain Lavino at Vienna and to get a new man, then in Egypt, to go to Berlin.<sup>2</sup>

The new man selected for Berlin had left the service of the Foreign Office in 1876, had acted as correspondent of the Standard in the Near and Middle East and had later accompanied Wolseley's Egyptian expeditions. In 1883 he was in India and in 1884 travelled across Persia from Bushire to the Caspian Sea. In 1886 he represented the Standard in Bulgaria, where he had formed a close friendship with Sir Frank Lascelles, then Consul-General at Sofia, himself intimate with Sir Edward Malet, then Ambassador at Berlin, whom Lascelles was to succeed in 1895. The name of the new man was Valentine Chirol. His appointment in 1892 as correspondent of The Times at Berlin coincided with increased tension between the Powers over South Africa. He found the Germans, as a people, were possessed by the fear that the British would soon dominate the lower half of the African Continent and later the whole of it. The interest of Germany, or

<sup>1</sup> Bell to Richards, February 27, 1892. (B. 2/251.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For Lavino's later career see infra, pp. 375 ff.



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more strictly of numerous Germans in South Africa and their friends at home, originated in the natural expansion given to the commerce of the Reich by its unification. Merchants and shippers regarded it as a source of profitable trade and a desirable carrying route; a number of theorists looked upon its Boer districts as an appropriate area for the absorption of surplus population. The mining interests of capitalists inspired the establishment by German industrialists of numerous auxiliary enterprises. It later became the dream of German Imperialists to create in South Africa an oversea German Empire. One of the earliest promoters of the idea of a German South Africa was Ernst von Weber, a German mineowner, who, in 1879, published a call to his fellow nationals to agitate for the creation of a territory in South Africa equal in economic significance to that of British India. While, from the first, lack of interest in such a scheme was conspicuous in Bismarck's policy, a decade later the Bremen and Hamburg merchants compelled him to regard the future of German Africa as a political issue. Whether Bismarck liked it or not the appeal, romantic as well as economic, of South Africa could not be denied. It was an appeal that the young Germans of the First Reich could not resist.

The pride of the German nation had mounted high since the victory of 1870 and the unification of the Reich in 1871. Its European situation seemed satisfactory enough. The new German Empire was supported by understandings with neighbours that still appeared impressive. The oldest of these understandings, the Dreikaiserbund, or League of the three Emperors, set up in 1873, had been re-established in 1881 and. though renewed in 1884 lapsed in 1887. The dual alliance of 1879 between Austria-Hungary and Germany, assuring to each party support from the other in case of an attack by Russia, remained the keystone of the Bismarck system. The Triple Alliance between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia, established in 1882 and renewed in 1887 was supported by "sideagreements" covering Serbia and Roumania. When the Dreikaiserbund lapsed Bismarck signed a treaty with Russia in which he promised German neutrality in the event of an Austrian attack on Russia; and in which he received in return the promise of Russian neutrality in the event of a French attack on Germany. This was the famous "Reinsurance Treaty." A loosening of the tie with Russia would invite her to make, or accept, offers from France. This was inevitable since France's position pressed her to search for an ally. Her Egyptian policy

made a French understanding with Britain impossible. Hence the neutralization of Russia meant the isolation of France. By thus completely isolating France, Bismarck put the finishing touch to a policy designed to keep the peace in Europe generally and, in particular, to leave Germany free to deal with France. The Boulangist agitation in France made a conflict more than likely; so thought the Germans. Bismarck might have been ready, given Russian support, to make an end of French revanchisme, but Russia was more interested in Constantinople. German opinion generally did not then grieve over Russian detachment.

Another and far greater grievance was at hand. German pride and nationalism exaggerated British successes in Africa. That Holland should cede the Gold Coast to Britain in 1872, and in the same year that West Griqualand should be added to Cape Colony, may have seemed merely usual in London; it seemed an enormity in Berlin. And there was more to follow. In 1875 the Suez Canal shares were purchased from the Khedive. In 1881 the Transvaal or South African Republic recognized British suzerainty. The British annexation of Bechuanaland in 1885 was followed by the taking over of Zululand in 1887 and the occupation of Uganda in 1890.

The rewards of Germany's own colonial policy seemed trifling by comparison with those of Britain. Her steady expansion was taken as a great blow to the pride of the professional classes. the professors, teachers, and doctors, and as a clear proof of the weakness of Bismarck's policy. Colonial business men were less angry but they compelled Bismarck to pass a Subsidy Bill in 1884, for the benefit of the North German Lloyd. Pressure from the nationalists continued; the number of colonial societies increased, and with each successive British annexation their anti-British manifestations and resolutions multiplied. members of these societies found it increased their popularity to advertise a dislike of Bismarck's old-fashioned policy towards Britain, of British expansionist methods, and of the type of civilization that Britain was spreading. When these German-South African patriots heard of the terms of the Anglo-German Zanzibar Treaty of 1890 they deemed them unbearable. Bismarck told the Reichstag that he absolutely refused to act towards the Sultan of Zanzibar in opposition to England. "I do not intend either actively to oppose England or even to take note of those steps which subordinate British individuals have taken against us. In Zanzibar and in Samoa we act in perfect harmony with the British Government . . . English colonial interests



## THE KAISER "DROPS THE PILOT"

compete with ours in numerous places, and subordinate colonial officials are occasionally hostile to German interests. Nevertheless we are acting in perfect unison with the British Government, we are absolutely united and I am firmly resolved to preserve Anglo-German harmony and to continue working in cooperation with that country. The preservation of Anglo-German good will is, after all, the more important thing." The speech was made on January 26, 1889, shortly before the succession of William II. On March 20, 1890, Bismarck was dismissed by the new Emperor. Meanwhile the Zanzibar Treaty was signed.

Within six months or so, i.e., on September 28, 1890, the Pan-German League was founded. The young Kaiser was wholeheartedly in favour of a "new course," of colonial expansion and also of what Bismarck used to say was its simultaneous incompatible—i.e., a big navy, which, thought the old Chancellor, was of little use if it could be bottled up in the Baltic or lost in the open sea. One of Bismarck's reasons, too, for refusing to follow an anti-British colonial policy had been his need to get British support for the Triple Alliance. The Triplice was strong enough, Bismarck held, to interest the British, who aimed to prevent a close understanding between Germany and Russia. Britain, it was true, understood that Germany could not stand alone against a combination of Russia and France: that a strong Austria was necessary to Germany; also a firm Italy. But Italy could only be firm if her policy was in harmony with that of Britain in her capacity as a fellow-Mediterranean Power. This was the point at which the Triple Alliance touched Britain's sympathies. Hence the Mediterranean agreements of 1887 between Britain, Austria, and Italy which reaffirmed the status quo and maintained Turkey's control over the Straits was in the highest degree satisfactory to the Iron Chancellor.

The circumstances were complex, but the issue was simple. Bismarck would leave Britain alone in the colonies if she would support the Triple Alliance to the extent of following up the conversations about Mediterranean policy which had been proceeding for some time between the Italian Ambassador and the Foreign Office. He would even conciliate Britain in Africa or elsewhere so long as he got his terms in Europe, *i.e.*, the connexion, limited though it was, of Britain with the Triple Alliance. His speeches in 1884 and 1889 meant that he was getting this. Neither the Pan-German League nor the Colonial Society knew that behind Bismarck's acceptance of Heligoland,

which the much-abused Zanzibar Treaty gave Germany, lay the promise of the Kiel Canal. This ignorance was paralleled in high British circles. Lord Salisbury had told the German Ambassador he was "quite unable to see what real advantage Heligoland would be to Germany." Bismarck knew well enough, but he did not tell. "The English Cabinet," Hatzfeldt reported, "has not the slightest idea what value Heligoland has for us in regard to the Baltic Canal, and it goes without saying that I have most carefully avoided letting any knowledge of this subject leak out "-so important was it not to upset British feeling. The Kaiser's "new course" viewed British feeling verv differently. It was believed possible to please German Imperialists by criticizing and appearing to thwart Britain, and at the same time to keep Britain's connexion with the Triple Alliance. Nothing at this time agitated Germans, even the less nationalist. so much as the British treatment of "Low Germans" as the Pan-Germans began to term the Boers. The more fanatical nationalists made no secret of a desire to end the old policy of preserving Anglo-German good will. There was little doubt that, broadly speaking, Britain was unpopular.

The Anglo-German agreement over Zanzibar was followed by the signature on May 24, 1891, of an Anglo-Italian agreement over Abyssinia. Britain had settled one more African problem, and through it a Mediterranean one. Thus British association with the Triple Alliance was brought closer. Within three months the Kaiser paid his first State visit to London. He pledged himself to maintain the historic friendship between the two nations "which had so often trod side by side." More, the new Kaiser had no wish to renew Bismarck's "Reinsurance Treaty"; Russia was dropped. The inevitable result, announced on August 27, 1891. was the creation of the Franco-Russian rapprochement which it had always been the heart of Bismarck's lifelong policy to prevent. As Franco-German relations were by no means cordial, the Kaiser's official efforts, whatever the degree of British unpopularity in Germany, were naturally directed after August towards confirming the strength of the Triple Alliance.

British policy, under Salisbury, continued to be dominated by the prospect of Russian aggression against Constantinople and the problem of defending Egypt so long as it should be in British occupation. It has been seen that the necessity for safeguards against Russia and France was Bismarck's opportunity to bring Britain into relation with Italy and Austria. He had failed at

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bismarck (G. and E. III, 147) gives an account of his general attitude towards Britain and to the Treaty.

#### GERMANY AND SOUTH AFRICA

the time to secure Britain as his pledged ally, but he kept Russia from France; he had also refrained from favouring their designs at the expense of Britain. The Kaiser's Guildhall speech, coupled with German conciliatory action in the matter of colonies and the Italian readiness for a Mediterranean understanding, greatly relieved the feelings of many English observers who had entertained fears that the Kaiser's foreign policy was to reverse all that Bismarck had accomplished, including the Mediterranean agreement. It had become part of British policy to maintain the Austrian and Italian connexion, since it would never do to place the British fleet between the French Navy and, if the Straits were forced, the Russian; the Italians and Austrians in such a situation might turn the scale. Hence, when Salisbury's Government, which had been in power from August 3, 1886, fell on August 18, 1892, and was succeeded by Gladstone's fourth administration, Salisbury left for Currie, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, a letter intended for Rosebery's perusal. "The key of the present situation in Europe," he wrote, "is our position towards Italy, and through Italy to the Triple Alliance."

Meanwhile the German nationalists, so far from losing hope of a German South African Empire, were conducting a systematic political agitation with the object of educating the public, of stimulating emigration and commercial enterprise in the Boer Republics. Inevitably, great public interest was taken in Lorenzo Marques, the port of Delagoa Bay, the only port in South Africa not under the Union Jack. The British, it was known, were anxious to bring this last port also into their own hands and ultimately secure economic unity on a free trade basis for the whole of South Africa. Cecil Rhodes's scheme to purchase all the Mozambique Colony was seriously discussed by the Portuguese. When they announced in 1891 their refusal of the offer they allowed to Britain pre-emptive rights on the port. Rhodes had to make an effort to be satisfied with the Portuguese terms but the incident and the concession were regarded by the interested German public as one more slight to the Fatherland. The matter, indeed, was more significant than appeared.

A German counter-move had, in fact, failed. In 1889 a London syndicate had completed a railway for the Portuguese from Delagoa Bay to a point within 15 miles of the boundary between Mozambique and the Transvaal. Information came to Rhodes that the Transvaal Government, with the support of the German Government, had offered to purchase the entire line. Repre-

sentations were made and the Portuguese refusal to sell the railway was quickly announced. British fears that the Germans would maintain pressure did not diminish. The German Press was full of accounts of the growing movement in favour of repudiating the Zanzibar Agreement of 1890 and the Wilhelmstrasse was being urged to be ever more watchful over German interests in Africa. Germans were increasing in number and activity at Lorenzo Marques. The Boers, too, were welcoming Germans in virtue of the rights the Republic retained under the London Agreement of 1884. This was the status auo for the maintenance of which the Germans were certain to press at all times, as the future was to show. The Transvaal mines would continue to attract large numbers of German speculators and settlers and the German carrying trade would expand. Under such a system of managing the status auo. the Republic must, in a brief space of time, become more than half German. It was feared by British business men that both the Boers and the Germans would conceive it to be their interest to resist Rhodes's plan for the economic federation of the South African States. Time was to prove that these fears were not ill-founded.

German political and economic penetration became increasingly The German settlements remained essentially significant. national; their settlers displayed the German flag and took every opportunity of asserting national German consciousness. A few mining magnates gave up their German nationality. Alfred Beit, originally from Hamburg, became a director of the Chartered Company. Julius Wernher was another such example. These, however, were exceptions. The general tendency throughout the Transvaal was to keep Germans German and to import more of them, more German machines and more German materials. The Berlin firm of Siemens controlled the production of electricity on the Rand and other German firms waited fruitfully on the Boers for concessions. The policy continued to carry with it discrimination against British interests. A Hamburg merchant who had settled in South Africa secured from Kruger the exclusive right to manufacture and deal in dynamite. A result was the raising of the cost to British mining companies to 20 or 30 per cent. above the world price. It became the settled policy to boycott British firms throughout the Transvaal, Englishmen were overlooked in favour of Germans in competition for official posts. There was nothing, however, in British policy towards South Africa that should have encouraged either the Germans or the Boers to suppose that these acts would pass unobserved.

#### CHIROL GOES TO BERLIN

This then was the situation which faced Chirol when, in 1892, he was first appointed to represent The Times in Berlin. The importance of maintaining a balanced attitude towards European and colonial problems was recognized at P.H.S. The relations of The Times with the German Government, which had been friendly during Bismarck's period, were maintained during the early period of his successor, Caprivi. Many notices written by Chirol between 1892 and 1894 for publication in The Times witness to a partiality for the Germans. This partiality was perfectly agreeable to the office. When, in a dispatch during November, 1893. it chanced that Chirol was, for once, less friendly than usual, Wallace warned him not to enter into polemics with the German One dispatch of his (on a German view of British foreign policy) was held over on account of "our desire that better relations should be established between the two countries," and because "we think that the publication of your dispatch would have an opposite effect." It is not to be thought, however, that Chirol was anti-German. At this period, he may better be described as a not uncritical pro-German.2

On the other hand, the convictions of Bell and Wallace on foreign affairs, it must be admitted, disinclined them, for various reasons, to follow the doctrine concerning European collaboration hitherto held in P.H.S. Before their time it was understood in the office, as elsewhere, that the forces of political gravitation would draw Britain towards Germany and the Triple Alliance, rather than towards France and Russia. This point of view began to find less confident expression in The Times during 1890 and less still during 1891; by 1892, while it cannot be said to have been extinct, it was yielding to Wallace's preference for Anglo-Russian amity. Nor in his view was Egypt an inevitable cause of a permanent rift between Britain and France, for there was nothing in Egypt of such importance to Britain that it would offset the hostility of France. Wallace, unlike Bell, was not a supporter of the occupation for occupation's sake. Unlike Bell, again, he entertained no deeply seated likes and dislikes of foreign Powers. Finally he was deeply sceptical of the strength of Italy and persuaded of the consequent dangerous instability of the Triple Alliance, impressive as it looked on paper; and, hence, doubtful of the utility of the British Mediterranean agreement. Italy, he contended, ought to be content to take her proper position, i.e., as a second-rate Power. She should make terms with France.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wallace to Chirol, November 14, 1893. (F.2/199.)

<sup>2&</sup>quot; Throughout the Nineties he [V.C.] was thoroughly Germanophile." Cf. Eckardstein, Ten Years at the Court of St. James, p. 139.

Bell's view differed from Wallace's in important respects. He was a thoroughgoing believer in the British occupation of Egypt. He was, in consequence, consistently hostile to France. As he wrote in 1892, he enjoyed the opportunity "to tread on the tail of France's coat." 1 Nor was there, he thought, any risk in this attitude, even during the critical period of the Kruger telegram. Bell believed that any anti-German feeling here was purely a passing phase and could never last or become the basis of policy. He customarily invoked the simple principle: "I believe in racial affinities, and that deep down in our bones is hatred of the French."2 But if Bell's position differed from Wallace's, like Wallace, he was not sure of the wisdom of the Mediterranean agreements. Cromer was often Bell's mentor. From him he received in January, 1891, "one little diplomatic hint . . . I think I often spoke to you of the value of Italian friendship. I remember Mr. Walter when he was here speaking to me in the same sense. I must say that when I was in Italy my views as to the value of the Italian alliance rather changed . . . I came away impressed with the weakness of Italy as a Power. . . . Although, under certain conditions, we might be of great use to Italy, I am not so certain that Italy can be of much use to us."3

Bell took to heart such a hint from such a source; and all the more seriously as Wallace's investigation and experience had led him independently to the same result. The estimate was novel, even revolutionary at the time. It was bound, if and when followed up, to have a profound effect upon British foreign policy, for it meant our ignoring in terms of value a link between this country and Germany. Italy was either strong or weak. Bell and Wallace decided that she was weak. While there was nothing like anti-Germanism in the thought of Bell or Wallace or Chirol, this estimate of the value of Italy in an Anglo-Russian crisis in the Mediterranean necessarily affected their basic policy. They felt altogether indifferent towards the central aim of German policy towards Great Britain, namely, to bring her by persuasion, or, failing that, by other means into relations of intimacy that would, in the event of a dispute between the Central Powers and France, place the greatest fleet in the world on the side of the strongest army. In the circumstances the only attitude towards the new Germany was one of impartiality, together with a frank and benevolent neutrality towards any grouping in which she was interested.

Bell to Garrett, December 20, 1892. (B. 6/929.)
 The Life and Letters of Moberly Bell, p. 212.
 Sir Evelyn Baring to Bell, January 15, 1891. (P.H.S.)

## RELATIONS WITH GERMANY IMPROVED

This, then, was the policy of The Times when Chirol first went to Berlin. Britain and Germany remained in close accord throughout 1893, except for a minor breeze over Siam, for which Wallace blamed Rosebery. In the following year the British treaty with King Leopold of Belgium over the Congo led to something like friction between Britain and Germany. It, i.e., the Anglo-Congolese Agreement of May 12, 1894, was, however, the occasion of comment by The Times that, except for an initial slip, was impartial. The German Government were contesting the British attempt to realize the project of an "all red route" from the Cape to Cairo. Their case was argued by Chirol against Rosebery and, to some extent, against Wallace. The details of the affair are complicated: it is enough here to recall that Great Britain acquired under Article III of the Agreement the use of a narrow strip of territory running from the northern extremity of Lake Tanganyika to Uganda. This territory, acquired in the novel form of a "lease," was urgently required to facilitate communications. A previous attempt at the time of the negotiation of the Anglo-German treaty of 1890 to secure a similar strip from Germany had failed. Britain then admitted Germany's treaty rights in this respect. She, with France and Britain, was one of the guarantors of Congo neutrality. Germany's second reason against it was that she was not prepared to permit another Power to step in between her own East African colony and the Congo Free State. Hence, when in May, 1894, it became known that, by the conclusion of secret negotiations, Britain had secured the lease from Leopold of a narrow strip of territory running from the northern extremity of Lake Tanganyika to Uganda, the Germans strongly objected. To them, the signature of such an agreement, without a word, so soon after their earlier protests was either deliberately dishonest or deliberately provocative. The private explanation of Her Majesty's Government made the Germans still more angry. They could not believe that the inclusion of Article III concerning the lease was due to sheer inadvertence. But that was the fact. Percy Anderson, the colonial expert in the Foreign Office, who had taken part in the Anglo-German negotiations of 1890. concentrated so narrowly upon the possibility of French opposition that the existence of objections on the part of Germany had simply been forgotten. Anderson's error was pardonable since he was under the instructions of Lord Kimberley, who rushed through the negotiations with King Leopold at a speed which made impossible any conference with the Ambassador in Berlin, who was taken completely by surprise when the treaty was announced. The truth served only to

convince the Germans of British duplicity. The French rejoiced that their objections were given consideration while those of the Germans were ignored. Nor was the soundness and justice of the German position quickly appreciated by the Foreign Office. Rosebery's theory was that Germany's protest originated in a desire to encourage France to irritate Great Britain, and by so doing to provide an opportunity for themselves to squeeze concessions in Samoa. Accordingly he regarded the German protest as frivolous and the strong language in which it was couched as nothing but bluster, to which the proper answer was counter-bluster. Rosebery succeeded only in raising the diplomatic temperature. Next he tried the expedient of privately informing the Austrian Ambassador, in words designed to "ricochet through Vienna to Berlin," that the German attitude might well lead Britain to abandon her friendly relations with Italy and Austria-Hungary and to come to an agreement with France. This last threat might have had point if, as Rosebery believed, Germany was encouraging France. In fact she was resisting a French attempt to use the incident for an attack on the whole British position in Africa. Herbette, the Ambassador in Berlin, formally proposed joint action. Moreover, for the reasons already given, the German Government, so far from blustering, were striving to take a moderate course against a strengthening current of nationalist opinion at home. The colonial party was pressing the Government to make its protest the opportunity to secure decisions regarding Walfisch Bay. The Kaiser preferred to take his stand purely upon his treaty rights. Hence Rosebery's language to Deym, the Austrian Ambassador, served but to increase German determination to resist Article III. An extremely awkward situation was provoked.

At the outset of this affair both the Director of the Foreign Department and the Berlin Correspondent were absent from their posts; Wallace was in Spain and Chirol in Egypt. The latter's assistant, C. C. Earle, appears to have understood the situation, but, in Wallace's absence, his reports seem not to have been appreciated. The Times therefore did not at first estimate at its true value the gravity of the situation. But in Germany feeling grew steadily more hostile. Wallace returned to the office on June 5. A better understanding was not simultaneously manifested. Only on the evening of June 12, when a long telegram from Chirol was received giving a sympathetic inter-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> When Chirol returned, he pointed out to Wallace (June 13) that Earle, who got his information from Kayser, the colonial expert at the German Foreign Ministry, had correctly reported the German protest in a passage that had been struck out of his telegram as printed in *The Times*. (C.U.L., Wallace Papers.)

#### FRICTION OVER THE CONGO

pretation of the German standpoint, did a clear view of the facts present itself. The publication of this telegram in the paper of the 13th was accompanied by a leading article admitting that the British Government had been at fault: and. under the impression, apparently, that a compromise was about to be announced, tried to wind up the affair: "whatever clumsiness there may have been in the methods of Lord Kimberlev [the Foreign Secretary], or however he may have failed to grasp all the conditions and considerations it behoved him to bear in mind, the German people will do this country a great injustice if they believe for a moment in the existence of any deliberate intention to overreach them." The incident, however, was not to be so easily closed. The Germans were determined that the cancellation of Article III should be explicit. Wallace, while recognizing the reasonableness of the German case, seems to have accepted the view that their protest may have been designed to use a false step on our part to extort concessions for themselves. 1 A long confidential letter from Berlin dated June 13 gave him the true grounds of the German complaint. Chirol, having seen Marschall, Holstein and Kayser, had come away with the conviction that Germany was in the right and "will be content with nothing less than the cancelling of the Congo Agreement."2 His telegram to The Times which appeared next day made clear both the studied moderation and the unflinching determination of the German Government. The leading article accompanying the dispatch (June 15) blamed the Foreign Office for being caught napping and admitted that there was "something to be said" for the German legal position; it added that German susceptibilities should be the less irritated as British interests had recently been injured by a Franco-German treaty made without consulting Great Britain.3

On the 15th Chirol saw Malet, the British Ambassador, and listened to his complaint "that he cannot as yet get the British Government to recognize the necessity of at least treating the German protest seriously. . . . H.M.G. had better make up their minds without much delay, for I am quite satisfied the Germans will not be slow this time to follow up a word with a [diplomatic] blow."4 Chirol expected the Germans to back the French to the extent of helping France to transform the Egyptian into a pan-African question. His personal interest in Egypt made him the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This may be inferred from Wallace to Chirol, June 15, 1894. (F.2/513.)

<sup>2</sup> Chirol to Wallace, June 13, 1894. (C.U.L., Wallace Papers.)

<sup>3</sup> Wallace put this argument to Chirol in his letter of the 15th. (P.H.S., F.2/513.)

Chirol replied denying its validity on June 18. (C.U.L., Wallace Papers.)

<sup>4</sup> Chirol to Wallace June 16, 1894. (C.U.L. Wallace Papers.)

more anxious that the home country should not push the Germans to any such extreme. He quoted in his telegram of that evening "an evidently official communiqué in to-day's Cologne Gazette" and added that:

As in this statement, so also, I understand, in all its official communications with her Majesty's Government the German Government has studiously abstained from any language calculated to embitter the present controversy. It undoubtedly considers itself to be aggrieved by a want of that confidence which it conceived itself warranted in expecting from the friendly relations it has sought to cultivate with England, especially in all extra-European questions, ever since the conclusion of the Anglo-German Agreement, but it is anxious, nevertheless, to deal with the question now at issue solely on its own merits, and not to complicate it with other African questions which would gladly be grafted on to it in less friendly quarters. But if any such complications are to be avoided a prompt and satisfactory settlement is of urgent importance, for public opinion may not continue to maintain the self-restraint for which the Government has hitherto striven. (June 16, 1894.)

On the 17th Chirol learned of Rosebery's attempt to influence Berlin through Vienna, and was requested by the German Government to inform Malet of their awareness of it; also to add that the Emperor was exceedingly angry at the attempt to influence him through his allies. 1 On the 18th, however, he learnt that the British Government had given way, to which event he was able only to make a veiled reference in his evening telegram. That message again praised the Germans for their moderation. The leading article of the 19th, while echoing these sentiments, agreed that the Foreign Office had not been guilty of deliberate duplicity. The publication of the settlement was deferred. The Germans themselves desired to maintain silence until the British Government had been consulted. Chirol was asked by Holstein to see Malet on the point. On June 23 Chirol announced that the incident was virtually closed by the agreement to cancel Article III. "For all those," he observed, "who have at heart the maintenance of good relations between England and Germany the result must be a matter of sincere congratulation. The German Government had in its opinion a very strong case, and pressed it home with undeniable firmness. but without undue vehemence."

The leading article on the 23rd censured the Foreign Office severely for its blunder and observed that "people who make

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chirol to Wallace, June 18, 1894. (C.U.L., Wallace Papers.)

## WALLACE'S OPINION OF ROSEBERY

serious mistakes may indeed think themselves fortunate when they escape from the consequences upon such terms." On this occasion the German Government was highly praised. "The line taken by *The Times*," Chirol was able to tell Wallace on the same day, "has been much appreciated by the German Government as well as by the Ambassador; both Baron Marschall and the latter expressed to me their conviction that it had materially helped to influence H.M.G., whilst the friendly tone towards Germany had produced an excellent effect upon public opinion over here."

The remarks of Marschall and Malet were hardly empty compliments. When on June 14 Rosebery spoke to the Austrian Ambassador of the possibility of coming to an understanding with France he was clearly, on that day, determined to resist the German demand. By the 17th he had come to the conclusion (as he told Count Deym) that "the strip of 25 kilometres in African territory, which was partly desert, was not important enough to England to cause a complete change of her policy. A further careful study of the German Note had also convinced him that it was somewhat less offensive than he had thought at first." Between these two dates The Times had published Chirol's telegrams stating the German case and its leading article of June 15. The language used regarding the Foreign Office was stronger on the 23rd than on the 19th. The increase of vigour may be attributed to the information of a slight hitch in the negotiations reported confidentially by Chirol on the 20th. Wallace, too, had digested Chirol's confidential letter of the 15th, and had spoken to Kimberley on the subject. "I warned the Foreign Office of the attitude that Germany was going to assume," he afterwards wrote to Lavino. "You know, I presume, about Rosebery's ill-advised attempt to bring pressure on Berlin through Vienna. Such a piece of bungling from beginning to end I have rarely heard of, but of course we let the Government down easily, as the honour of the country was involved."2

The Congo affair thus settled, relations between the Germans and *The Times* became cordial. Wallace described to Chirol his experiences during the events of the summer which included the visit of the Kaiser to Cowes in these words:

Hatzfeldt, after holding aloof so long, has suddenly made an advance. Two or three weeks ago I met him at dinner at the Empress Eugénie's (of all places in the world) and he showed himself unusually

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Wallace, June 23, 1894. (C.U.L., Wallace Papers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Wallace to Lavino, August 28, 1894. (P.H.S.)

cordial. At Cowes, when he was in attendance on the Emperor, he maintained the same attitude, and, a few days ago, he called on me and remained about an hour and a half—speaking very freely on the European situation in general and the position of England in particular. What this change of attitude on his part means I have not yet been able to fathom. He has now gone, or is about to go, abroad for his holiday. He is evidently ill and has aged very much but his head is as clear as ever, and that is saying a good deal.

At Cowes I spent a couple of hours with the Kaiser and was much interested in observing him closely. He was much interested in hearing that in several parts of the world I have noticed that German merchants are squeezing us out and I had a little chaff with him about what I called "with His Majesty's permission, this unfortunate evil." His Majesty jocularly accepted the term and expressed the hope that the "evil" would go on increasing. He made himself very agreeable but of course there was no serious talk. Among trivial peculiarities I noticed that like our friend Ferdinand he had a bracelet on each wrist but unlike F. no rings on his fingers.1

The British Government, with the Congo affair so recently composed, again, towards the end of the year, found themselves at cross-purposes with Germany. In December there arose a question of international cooperation concerning the Greek bondholders, which was settled by the Foreign Office in terms of an Anglo-French démarche which the Germans, who were equally interested, highly resented. Holstein, who gave Chirol an account of the correspondence, was much annoyed when Kimberley expressed the expectation that German demands would be over-exacting, without having inquired from the Wilhelmstrasse what they would be, and while knowing that the Germans had never concealed their desire to cooperate with England. Kimberley's action was the more unhappy since the French, as he might have foreseen, gave the Germans the information. Chirol considered the instance of the Greek bondholders as one more example of a Foreign Office bias against Germany. The general position as, in the view of Holstein, it appeared to the Germans at the end of 1894, is described in Chirol's letter of December 5, which deserves complete reproduction:

Confidential.

December 5, 1894

My Dear Wallace,

I had a long and interesting conversation on Sunday last at the F.O. upon our present relations with Germany. I found Holstein, who has always been a consistent advocate of close relations between the two countries, profoundly dispirited. "We are drifting further

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wallace to Chirol, August 28, 1894.

## CHIROL ON GERMANY'S CASE AGAINST ENGLAND

and further apart." The maintenance of an intimate understanding between two states, in one of which foreign affairs are governed by a constant and paramount will whilst in the other they remain subject to the vicissitudes of parliamentary government, must always be a delicate task. Our friends abroad can only derive from complete confidence in the general lines of British policy the guarantees which in the case of other countries arise out of written treaties or verbal pledges. Germany has always been ready to make full allowance in this respect for the peculiar position of British Governments, but she expects that at least British Ministers should abstain from pressing for definite assurances in regard to hypothetical emergencies which they are unable to reciprocate. The endeavours which have been made of late to draw the German Government into committing itself to statements of future policy in connexion with questions which interest England far more than Germany, while carefully abstaining from any statements which might commit the British Government have done more than anything else to create the suspicion and irritation with which Lord Rosebery's Cabinet is viewed not in Germany alone.

An English Foreign Secretary has for instance no business to try and pin down Germany to a statement of her intentions with regard to the opening of the Straits when he himself leaves it in doubt whether there is a single Mediterranean interest for which England would bestir herself. Still less justifiable is it when he actually goes out of his way to give at the same time a menacing construction as against Germany to a diplomatic move which in itself need certainly not be considered detrimental to Germany's interests. A rapprochement between England and Russia would easily have been represented in a light which far from giving offence here would have harmonized with German policy; for if the Franco-Russian entente is directed in the eyes of the French mainly against Germany, Russia certainly looked upon it as a weapon against England as well as against Germany; and, by reducing the causes of friction between Russia and England, British diplomacy would to that extent weaken France's hold upon Russia, a consummation which Germany could only hail with lively satisfaction. It is quite another thing however if British Ministers wish to convey the impression that an understanding with Russia is only preliminary to an understanding with France which might ultimately detach Italy from the Triple Alliance and leave Germany and Austria isolated. That is a declaration of hostility towards Germany which she cannot overlook and which must profoundly affect her attitude towards England. Yet with the best will in the world it is difficult for Germany to construe the language and actions of British Ministers in any other sense.

There is no inclination on the part of the present Chancellor, any more than on that of his predecessor, to attach too much importance to the inevitable friction from time to time of English and German

# A FOREIGN DEPARTMENT UNDER WALLACE

colonial interests. If confidence exists between the two Governments, they will never quarrel over such questions. They only acquire importance when other causes weaken confidence, as at the present moment. Then undoubtedly the dog in the manger policy of England in Samoa, the disregard of existing treaties by British officers in the neutralized Hinterland of Togo, the designs of the Cape Government on Delagoa Bay, the secret assistance furnished to Witbooi's people in German S.W. Africa, the wholesale smuggling of gunpowder and arms into the German E. African Hinterland by the English African Lakes Co., &c., go to swell the dossier of England's unfriendliness.

This is, I think, briefly, the German case against England as presented to me, and you will see that it rests mainly upon construction rather than upon actual offences on our part.

I am told confidentially that the Emperor has himself used almost exactly similar language, only showing or affecting less disposition to believe that England is really animated by unfriendly intentions towards Germany. He also expressed great regret that the British Government did not take the Austrian and Italian Governments as well as his own more into its confidence. He alluded especially to the opening of the Straits which he understood to be one of the conditions of the Anglo-Russian understanding. In itself he considered such a measure to be far from detrimental to the interests either of England or of the Triple Alliance, for at present the closing of the Straits to the warships of foreign Powers merely meant that Russia has undisturbed possession of the Black Sea and that Constantinople lies at the mercy of a naval coup de main from the Crimea. If England took the trouble to explain in Vienna and Rome the grounds upon which presumably she was willing to concur in the opening of the Straits, she could easily carry the Austrian and Italian Governments with her, but if she came to an agreement with Russia behind their backs, she would merely destroy the last vestige of confidence still entertained towards her in those capitals.

How much that confidence has been shaken may be gathered from the fact that Baron Blanc¹ has lately consulted the German Government on the subject of the attitude to be observed towards England, and that considerable difficulty, not diminished by Germany's own misgivings, has been experienced in persuading him that Italy's wisest course is to go on hoping even against hope. Blanc seems to have stated frankly that, though he could never personally take part in the conduct of foreign affairs except on the basis of a close friendship with England, he was beginning to entertain such serious doubts as to the possibility of reckoning upon England's friendship that he was quite prepared to resign and make room for others who took what might perhaps after all be a sounder view of Italy's interests.

Ever yours,

VALENTINE CHIROL

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Italian Foreign Minister.

#### HOPES OF EUROPEAN AGREEMENT

Holstein's expressions regarding the possibility of a British understanding with Russia being the first step towards an understanding with France made with the motive of ultimately isolating Germany and Austria was too important to be ignored. *The Times* thus dealt with the suggestion:

There seems, in fact, to be no good reason why the partial combinations to which everyone is accustomed should not now receive an extension which requires but a slight effort of the imagination. A triple alliance on the one hand and a Franco-Russian understanding on the other, both aiming at preserving the peace of Europe, would seem naturally to pave the way for a larger agreement among civilized Powers sensible of the enormous folly of armed conflict at the present stage of the world's history. Friendship between two Powers need in no degree be regarded as exclusive of friendship between either Power and a third. In particular it ought not to be very hard to conceive that England, profoundly interested in the maintenance of peace, observes a neutrality, not of general distrust, but of benevolence; in other words, the precise attitude, which, if universally adopted, would afford the best attainable guarantee for the peaceful working out of every nation's destiny upon the lines of friendly emulation. (December 12, 1894.)

This statement of pacific policy, appropriate to a conservative and satisfied Power, interested above all in the preservation of things as they were, represents the programme which Wallace, as head of the Foreign Department, advocated in his more sanguine mood. The office as a whole was optimistic. There was a deep conviction, supported and illustrated by the paper's campaign against Home Rule, that as long as Britain remained faithful to Unionist principles she could deal effectively with agitation at home and jealousy in Europe. Nor, under Wallace, did the Foreign Department of The Times forget the requirements of policy towards the British Empire. It was plain enough, as the recent exchanges with Germany proved, that the paper needed information from South Africa. Imperial correspondence, however, was not Wallace's direct responsibility. Its growing importance justified Walter, Bell agreed, in creating a separate department. It could not be denied that the British public were deeply interested in Colonial affairs.

# VII

# IMPERIALISM: THE TRANSVAAL

ORDON's fate1 could hardly fail to stimulate the interest of the people of Britain in the safety of their fellowsubjects oversea; and, indeed, their prosperity. Circumstances, rather than deliberate pressure, seemed to point to the consolidation of British interests. The Times regarded Egypt as. for the time being, a British responsibility and nothing else. This was serious enough. South Africa was not yet regarded as a purely British sphere of influence, but the paper entertained no love and little respect for the Boers. The Boer War of 1880-1881 forced a revision of the view taken by The Times in 18742 that the Transvaal was a mere "petty Boer State" established upon native territory. But the defeat of Majuba did little to revise the paper's confident estimate of the situation. "It may be deemed incredible," commented the paper on February 28, 1881, "that 600 British soldiers, armed with breach loaders and occupying a defensible position, should not be able to make good this ground against five or even six times as many Boers." This complacent view, which reflected English opinion, regarded the defeat as due to bad luck rather than to general incompetence. in particular to the fact that no reserve of ammunition had been "carried up to the top of the Spitz Kop." Even during the period of Gladstone's hesitation over the expedition to rescue Gordon, the expressions of The Times regarding the Boer State were not free from severity.

It is becoming only too clear that we have to deal with a people who acknowledge no obligations and can be bound by no agreement. It was the fashion not long ago to represent them as a simple folk who went forth into the desert with the Bible in one hand and a purely defensive rifle in the other, asking nothing of the world but to be let alone to breed their cattle and conduct their patriarchal lives in their own way. The most daring romancer would hardly care to put forth this view of their character at the present time. The Transvaal has developed all the aggressiveness, the greed, the contempt for public law, and the disregard for all the right save that of the strongest

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter II, supra.

<sup>2</sup> The Times, January 19, 1874.

#### BOER ENCROACHMENTS

which distinguish the most autocratic dynasties of the Old World. (September 6, 1884.)

To make matters worse the Transvaal had made advances to Holland and to Germany, where, as *The Times* had said, "their advances have met with a certain amount of platonic favour," whereas "there is only one European Power with whom the Boers can possibly have to do for good or ill in South Africa, and that Power is England." (June 21, 1884.)

The Boers had been advancing into Bechuanaland, where British policy was still vague and undefined. The southern part between the Molopo River and Cape Colony, though complicated by the settlements of Stellaland and Goshen, was obviously intended for annexation to Cape Colony; the region north of the Molopo was a much more doubtful case, but it seemed clear to *The Times* that

The presence of the Boers in Bechuanaland is an outrage not only to the natives but to England. It is a clear defiance of our wishes, and a breach of compact which it would not be possible to permit. (October 11, 1884.)

Manifestly, the Boers, a "colony of half-civilized graziers," a "people whose insignificance is their best protection," could not be allowed to continue in their encroachments and insults to the British Flag. (October 9, 1884.) But, though the presence of the Boers in Bechuanaland was an outrage to the natives as well as to England, *The Times* in 1884 constituted itself neither the apostle of the civilising mission of Great Britain nor the prophet of expansion of British South Africa to the Equator. In 1884 its attitude towards the "white man's burden" outside the white man's territory was one of indifference. The paper's comment on October 30, 1884, regarding the difficulties arising from the encroachments of the Boers in Bechuanaland was that

If we had known how to let well alone, we should not have been in contact with the Boers at all, and their hands would have been kept tolerably full by tribes which we went out of our way to destroy. When party fights are waged over South African questions it is as well to remember that the origin of all our subsequent troubles is the Zulu War.

# And a fortnight later that

Our true policy is to do the duty that lies nearest us, to concentrate our energies upon the tasks already imposed upon us, and to look with the greatest suspicion upon any proposal, however philanthropically disguised, that may increase the area of our engagement. (November 12, 1884.)

### IMPERIALISM: THE TRANSVAAL

This attitude was intensified since *The Times* considered that any expansion beyond the borders of Cape Colony would be largely in the interests of the Colonists, and that the Cape Parliament ought therefore to do its utmost to help the Imperial Government in any work of expansion which it undertook. The policy of *The Times* was essentially practical, to a large extent dictated by considerations of hard cash, but it embraced a vision of some future form of Imperial federation made possible by commercial solidarity, enabling the Pax Britannica to spread outwards from the colonies where it already reigned. If *The Times* had no interest in "painting the map red," it did look forward to a time when British trade should be firmly established in all four corners of the earth.

The paper spent lavishly, in its poverty, on the endeavour to master the problems of the North African littoral, the Suez Canal, West Africa, and South Africa. The partiality the Walters had shown for *The Times* Cairo Correspondent confirmed a tendency that was shared by so temperate an Empire-builder as Wallace. In the years after Gordon's death, therefore, it was natural for Arthur Walter to press for the appointment of a Colonial Correspondent with a knowledge of African problems.

For the South African Empire was fated to grow. The British annexed Bechuanaland in 1885. The discovery in 1886 of sensationally rich gold deposits in the Witwatersrand attracted an influx of Britons as well as other foreigners into the Transvaal. *The Times* which had advised against annexation thus took stock a few years later: "Wisely or unwisely, the thing has been done." Yet the possibilities that it discerned in the future were bound to nourish the germ of Imperial fervour.

It was fully characteristic of the thinking within Printing House Square that on October 22, 1889, *The Times* should have given the British South Africa Company its blessing and have applauded the granting of a charter which should "lay the basis of a great English-speaking colony in what appears to be the fairest region of Africa." On November 1, the paper more explicitly wished it prosperity:

The British South African Company has its charter. It remains for it to go forward and prosper. Whether it finds the wealth of Ophir in the mountains and rivers of Mashonaland or not, we cannot doubt that it will lay the basis of a great English-speaking colony in what appears to be the fairest region of Africa.

### RHODES AND THE CHARTERED COMPANY

The attitude of benevolence continued. The Times upheld the aims and objects of the Chartered Company. Britain, and with it The Times, remained confident of the future of British interests in South Africa and for guarantee of their inviolability looked to the overwhelming strength of the British Navy. The paper, throughout the period, believed that both generous Imperial and selfish capitalistic policies were bound up together. This need not disturb a Free Trade nation. Not ourselves only, but the world would gain from the extension of British business in "the fairest region of Africa." As the Germans were anxious for territory, The Times declared that "so long as existing interests are fairly respected we have no reason whatever to grudge the accomplishment of their desires." Yet for The Times Imperialism, by which the paper meant the Union Jack and what it stood for, had by 1890 taken rank before all other considerations. However, the scramble went on, conferences were held and notes bandied about among the Governments in Berlin and Paris, London and Lisbon; and perhaps it was The Times that made, on August 26, 1890, the most far-sighted prophecy: "Agreements are all very well, but the real masters of Africa will be those who know how best to deal with Africans."

The type of public man who best expressed the Imperial feeling of Printing House Square was Cecil Rhodes. His views and those of The Times soon began to approximate. Arthur Walter's views were known: Wallace was more detached but agreed that The Times needed a Colonial "expert." Bell's personal interest in African policy was, in any case, natural and keen. He was confident that the right "expert" could be found. On May 1. 1890, Bell wrote to Sir Robert Herbert, Permanent Under-Secretary to the Colonial Office, and requested the favour of his assistance "either by general advice on the subject or by indication of any one who may be in a position to assist us." Three weeks later Bell wrote, as to a complete stranger, a letter addressed to a Miss Flora Shaw,1 at 5, Suffolk Place, Pall Mall. He informed her that "Sir R. Herbert has been good enough to give us your name as that of a person who would be willing to furnish us with a column once or twice a week on Colonial matters." He proceeded to ask, as of an inexperienced writer, for a specimen column "which might or might not be published." In fact Miss Shaw had benefited from useful experience on the staff of the Pall Mall Gazette under W. T. Stead, to whom she

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Miss Shaw was the second daughter of Major-General George Shaw, C.B., R.A., and granddaughter of the Rt. Hon. Sir Frederic Shaw, Bt., for many years Recorder of Dublin and M.P. for Dublin University. She married Colonel Sir Frederick (later Lord) Lugard in 1902, was created D.B.E. in 1918 and died in 1929.

# IMPERIALISM: THE TRANSVAAL

had been introduced by George Meredith; in fact she already knew Bell, 1 having met him in Egypt. Miss Shaw immediately submitted to Bell an article on "Egyptian Finance," a subject on which she knew he had expert knowledge. The article very favourably impressed Bell, and presumably Buckle. It appeared in The Times of May 29, 1890, covering three and a half columns. It was followed a fortnight later by an article on Nyasaland. During the next two years she contributed to the paper from Australia and South Africa. When in London she paid regular visits to the Colonial Office on behalf of the paper, and had won recognition as an Imperial and Colonial expert. views were definite; her influence was considerable. Shaw was among those who warmly approved the changes which took place at the Colonial Office in June, 1895, when Lord Salisbury was called upon to form a new Government on the resignation of Lord Rosebery. In the new Government Salisbury was Foreign Secretary as well as Prime Minister. Chamberlain took the Colonial Office, although other appointments were open to him. The country was ready for a more imaginative Imperialist policy, and Chamberlain's dynamic personality transformed what had been previously considered a second-rank position. Chamberlain was ably assisted by his Under-Secretary, Lord Selborne, and by the Permanent Under-Secretary, Sir Robert Meade. One of the Assistant Under-Secretaries, whose name occurs later in this Chapter, was Mr. E. Fairfield.

Miss Shaw's enthusiasm for the "awakened" Colonial Office, her great theoretical and practical knowledge of Imperial and Colonial affairs, and her natural ability and quickness all served to widen her sources of information and advance her influence. That she should share Rhodes's conviction that it was the destiny of Britain to spread through the heart of Africa was bound to be significant. Miss Shaw knew Rhodes well; she had seen for herself how immense were his power and influence in South Africa; she was in general agreement with his policies and she liked the man. The man himself did not underestimate the utility of such an able advocate. When he came to London he made a point of meeting her and discussing African affairs. But after Rhodes became Prime Minister of Cape Colony in 1890 his visits to England were necessarily not so frequent or so long. Also he was compelled to transact an increasing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Letter dated March 6, 1890, quoted in Miss Moberly Bell's *The Life and Letters of C. F. Moberly Bell*, p. 140: "Then dinner—hitherto with one of the Walters, or Buckle, but to-night with Miss Shaw." This was three months before Bell wrote his letter to the Colonial Office.



FLORA SHAW

#### FLORA SHAW AS COLONIAL CORRESPONDENT

portion of the Chartered Company's business with the Colonial Office by means of deputies. From 1892 onwards he frequently sent Dr. Rutherfoord Harris on missions to London in behalf of the Company. Naturally Harris was instructed to see, in fact to "cultivate," Miss Shaw.

Frederick Rutherfoord Harris, L.R.C.S.(Edin.), Englishman who practised medicine in Kimberley. Thus he was a professional colleague of Dr. Leander Starr Jameson. They were friends as well as colleagues and Jameson persuaded Harris to accompany him on the mission to Matabeleland he undertook for Rhodes in 1889. Harris found the trip so congenial that he determined to give up medicine. In a few months he was appointed Secretary of the Chartered Company at Cape Town. The position necessarily carried with it the full confidence of Rhodes. It was without exaggeration a key position in a situation with great political possibilities. In 1892 the "National Union" was formed in Johannesburg to secure political representation by constitutional means for the "Uitlanders." The Union members were recruited from the professional and working classes. The leading capitalists were not attracted by the innovation. The Rand magnates did not care for politics or what political agitation might lead to; they were far more afraid of a revolution than of Kruger. There was a demonstration against Kruger when Sir Henry Loch, the British Governor and High Commissioner, visited Pretoria in 1894. The President's attempt to commandeer Uitlanders to fight in one of his expeditions against the natives had failed and Loch was impressed with the state of feeling in Johannesburg and recognized the possibility of an Uitlander upheaval. He arranged for a force of police on the Bechuanaland border to be ready in case of emergency. Loch also gave full information to the Colonial Office of the dangerously discontented state of Johannesburg. When Rhodes, accompanied by Jameson, came to London in December, 1894, he gave the same warning. Both were lionized on this occasion. Rhodes was entertained by the Queen at Windsor and Jameson was created Commander of the Bath. The Prince of Wales graced the assembly at the Imperial Institute which listened to Jameson's glowing account of Rhodesia, described by *The Times* next day as "a happy combination of Canaan, Ophir and the Black Country." The paper took the opportunity to praise Rhodes's statesmanship in fostering cooperation between the Dutch and English populations of South Africa and in leaving to time the question of its political union. In conclusion the article said truly that Rhodes

and Jameson had dealt a severe blow to the policy of the Little Englanders. The paper gave general support to the policy of the South African statesmen. Bell entertained them at his house, and brought Sir Donald Wallace, Miss Shaw, and others to meet them.1

The Times, Bell certainly, was aware of the risks; at least of certain risks. If Britain in general overlooked the quickening of German concern over African developments, the journal was prone to recognize it. Even before the end of 1894 German interest in the situation of the Boer Republics had been explicitly noted and as explicitly rebutted. What justification, it was asked then, was there for Germany's interest in Delagoa Bay? "Unless Germany takes an extraordinary paternal interest in the Transvaal, it is difficult to see how she can be affected by proceedings at Delagoa Bay; and, even in that case, we trust that a Foreign Office remarkable . . . for diplomatic correctness will never forget that the foreign relations of the Transvaal are by treaty to be conducted through this country, and not otherwise."2 (November 22, 1894.) Obviously, the maintenance of the status quo in South Africa was but a temporary stand, not an ultimate ideal, of The Times; and the slightest inclination on the part of Germany to overlook any provision of the London [and Pretorial Convention of 1884 aroused deep suspicion. Throughout 1895, it was perceived, some such inclination existed. It was guessed in the office that difficulties with the Boers were in large part occasioned, how deliberately was unknown, by German activities. The Boers were not a people with whom The Times would shrink from dealing; nor was the journal afraid of talking frankly to the Germans. It has been seen that during 1893 and 1894 the paper had been a friend in need to the German Government. Chirol, like his predecessor, had gone to Berlin with instructions to be conciliatory. German reciprocity has been chronicled. A previous Chapter has shown how cordially Chirol was at once received by Friedrich von Holstein, who took the trouble to keep the correspondent exceptionally well informed and even prevailed upon him to act occasionally as a private channel of communication with the British Ambassador. Holstein made a speciality of press relations, but it is safe to assume that Chirol was on peculiarly intimate and friendly terms with him and other high officials of the Wilhelmstrasse. Both Holstein and Marschall undoubtedly

<sup>1</sup> At a dinner on January 22, 1895. Buckle was not present.
2 It may be disputed whether this is a correct statement of the situation: treaties between the Transvaal and other countries (except the Orange Free State) had to be ratified by the Queen, but Boer diplomacy was not carried on through the Foreign Office. The error in this leading article is significant.

#### JOHANNESBURG UNSETTLED

regarded Chirol's equipment and connexion as from the first entitling him to a rank above that of the influential journalist.

When in December, 1894, Chirol guitted Berlin for what proved to be an absence of a whole year, his relations with the German Government were unclouded. Chirol's last correspondence with Wallace before leaving Berlin recorded "long and friendly conversations" at the Wilhelmstrasse. The official relations between the two Powers were less happy. Upon posting the long dispatch already reproduced,1 Chirol departed upon the special mission for Egypt and the Far East which is described elsewhere in this work.<sup>2</sup> His first period in Berlin, thus terminated, may be described as not only a sympathetic but a successful attempt to interpret the policy of Germany. In Chirol's absence his assistant, C. C. Earle, took charge until his return in November, 1895. It was a period during which British policy in South Africa gravely disturbed the Powers, and Germany not least. The trouble began immediately in the New Year.

On the day after Rhodes and Jameson's return to Capetown on February 21, 1895, the Governor, Sir Henry Loch, announced his intention to retire. The choice of Sir Hercules Robinson (he was created Lord Rosmead in 1896) as his successor was much criticized in South Africa and at home. He was seventy years old and not in robust health. During his previous term of office, from 1880 to 1889, he had given solid support to Rhodes and had helped the B.S.A. Company obtain its Charter. This was a fact that many people remembered; some connected his appointment with Rhodes's recent visit to London. It was also noted that he was a director of the Standard Bank of South Africa and was on the board of De Beers. An article in The Times on March 28, 1895, doubted the wisdom of the choice of Robinson as Governor and High Commissioner in view of his connexion with De Beers, and expressed the fear that his known intimacy with the leading capitalists would lose him some of the respect due to the impartial representative of the Imperial Government. His appointment certainly appeared likely to strengthen the power of Rhodes rather than that of Whitehall. The Prime Minister of the Cape had, in fact, secured a Governor who should be amenable to his plans.

Robinson soon became aware of the unsettled state of affairs in Johannesburg. At the end of 1894 the prosperous Johannesburg solicitor Charles Leonard had been elected chairman of

See Chapter VI, pp. 154 ff., ante.
 See Chapter VIII, post.

the National Union, which was becoming increasingly powerful. In April, 1895, the National Union collected the support of some 32,000 signatures for a petition presented to the Volksraad asking for the franchise—a large increase on the petition of May, 1894, which was backed by only 13,000. If the Uitlanders were still unarmed, the growth of the opposition organized by the Union could not be ignored, either in London or South Africa. Political observers realized that anything might happen.

Among those at home deeply interested was The Times Colonial Correspondent. Miss Flora Shaw already knew that officials at the Colonial Office were discussing the likelihood of the Uitlanders resorting to force. She knew, too, that Rhodes, Prime Minister of the Cape and director of the South African Chartered Company, head of De Beers Diamond Company and one of the two managing directors of the Gold Fields Company, never lost sight of the need to extend British dominion northwards. Over and above his personal and financial interests in the goldfields, he could not ignore the economic and political trends in the Transvaal. Kruger's attempt to commandeer the Uitlanders for his expedition, Loch's visit to Pretoria and the subsequent agitation at Johannesburg had combined to inflame the elements represented in the National Union. Rhodes had taken the opportunity to discuss the agitation in the Transvaal with an old friend and colleague, Alfred Beit, who landed at the Cape at the beginning of June, 1895, after a visit to England. Beit, though a German, was a director of the B.S.A. Company, and had been one of the original petitioners for the Charter. His fortunes were deeply involved in the Transvaal gold industry, as he was a partner in the firm of Wernher, Beit and Company. Fresh from London, he was anxious for the latest news of the Transvaal. Rhodes told him that from all he heard "a rising in Johannesburg would take place sooner or later, and he then thought, as the Uitlanders were not properly prepared, it might be wise to have a force on the border to assist the people in Johannesburg in case of necessity." Rhodes, then, had already passed from Loch's idea of a police force on the Border to maintain order, to that of a force interested in assisting one party only—the British Uitlanders. For this purpose it would be necessary for the Chartered Company to station troops in the Bechuanaland Protectorate. The Colonial Office was pledged eventually to transfer that protectorate to the Chartered Company, but Rhodes did not deem it politic to inform the Imperial Government of his change of plan.

<sup>1</sup> Beit's evidence before the Select Committee on British South Africa, Question 8959.

#### HARRIS NEGOTIATES WITH CHAMBERLAIN

Chamberlain, Rhodes did not fail to remember, had expressed his intention of delaying the transfer. The Colonial Secretary had come to the conclusion that the natives would be better off under the rule of his Office than under that of the Chartered Company. Strong feelings, indeed, were rising in England on the question of the rights of natives and the desirability of handing over native territories to any Company. When Rhodes learnt that a deputation of Bechuana chiefs, headed by Khama, intended to proceed to England and petition their Queen to leave them under the protection of the Colonial Office. he scented danger. Harris was dispatched to London post-haste, arriving on July 27, 1895. His instructions were to protect the Company's interests and, above all, to obtain the immediate concession to the Company of the land lying between the Transvaal and Khama's country. In August the Crown Colony of British Bechuanaland, through which the railway ran as far as Mafeking, was in fact, transferred to the control of Cape Colony. But the future of the Protectorate, covering about 275,000 square miles, was still unsettled. All that Harris could appeal for, and that Chamberlain would concede, was a corridor through the Protectorate along the Transvaal border, which would at least enable the Company to continue the railway northwards in territory of its own. The native chiefs, strongly supported by missionary organizations, opposed Rhodes's and Harris's scheme. But Chamberlain appreciated the importance of railway development in South Africa. On November 7 he gave his decision that the three Bechuana chiefs, Khama, Bathoen and Sebele, must each yield a narrow strip for the railway. Large territories were reserved under the Crown for the native chiefs, and the B.S.A. Company was only to administer the rest of the Protectorate. Moreover, Chamberlain drove a hard bargain by making Rhodes and Harris renounce the subsidy of £200,000 previously granted by the Imperial Government towards the construction of the railway. As the Company was now bearing the responsibility of administering the new territory, they were permitted to augment their own police, to take over the horses and equipment of the Bechuanaland Border Police and to recruit any of the men.

Thus, despite certain disappointments, Harris secured for Rhodes a base for a force of men at Pitsani, close to the Transvaal border. *The Times*, liking the idea of the railway, offered Rhodes, through Flora Shaw's weekly article, its congratulations "on the achievement of a further step in the realization of the great scheme of South African development." Railway construction

## IMPERIALISM: THE TRANSVAAL

duly proceeded while Jameson, as the Chartered Company's official in charge of the administration of the new territory, urged forward the transformation of Pitsani into a military base.

In the meantime, Alfred Beit had gone on to Johannesburg. His immediate object was to investigate for himself the state of Uitlander opinion in the city. He had also promised to discuss with Charles Leonard, of the National Union, and Lionel Phillips, director of many of the principal mining companies and president of the Chamber of Mines, Rhodes's plan to keep a force on the border in readiness for any emergency in Johannesburg. He did not meet with their ready support. The leaders all believed in constitutional reform. Leonard's solution was to influence Kruger by constitutional means, while Phillips's was to spend more money in the attempt to get more progressives returned to the Volksraad. The discussion settled nothing; but Leonard and Phillips agreed to go and talk the matter over with Rhodes. Beit had to return to England in July and the meeting did not take place until October, 1895. There were then present at Groote Schuur, Rhodes, his brother Colonel Frank Rhodes, John Hays Hammond, the eminent American mining engineer, Phillips and Leonard. Leonard produced one more manifesto reciting the Uitlanders' grievances and demands. Rhodes approved the statement; but, in view of the almost certain event of its rejection by Kruger, he insisted upon the preparation of an alternative plan for immediate action. Rhodes had the plan ready. It was simple. But it was not a constitutional plan for reform. There was to be a revolutionary rising in Johannesburg, followed by a seizing of the Pretoria Arsenal. At this point Robinson was to arrive from the Cape and exert his influence to obtain from Kruger a favourable settlement for the Uitlanders. This was the only political element in the plan. Jameson would play an important part but he was to stay with his troops on the frontier, only marching to Johannesburg if the details of the plan went wrong, or if the rebels were placed by the Boers in a situation of great risk or danger. Rhodes's personality, and the knowledge that he would shoulder a large part of the financial responsibility for the plan, had due effect on the two wavering delegates; the reformers keyed themselves up to support revolutionary measures. Thus the leaders seemed to be unanimously in favour of the Rhodes-Jameson plan.

Accordingly, preparations for the rising went ahead. Colonel Frank Rhodes was sent to Johannesburg in October, nominally

#### HARRIS CULTIVATES MISS SHAW

as manager of the Consolidated Gold Fields Company, but actually to take charge of the military preparations and with full authority to draw on the Chartered Company for any amount. Arms were ingeniously smuggled into the Transvaal through the agency of the De Beers Company. Jameson thus assembled between 400 and 500 men at Pitsani, with quantities of stores and ammunition. Simultaneously, Harris, in the thick of his negotiations with the Colonial Office, was also busy buying arms for the Company.

Another principal duty which Rhodes placed upon Harris's shoulders was that of maintaining contact with the British Press. He expressed to Harris particular anxiety that abundant information should be given to Miss Shaw. Her interest in South Africa was now keener than ever. She had given considerable thought to pressing problems during her annual vacation. In September she was back at Printing House Square. Shortly afterwards Harris came to see her, to discuss various South African questions. Miss Shaw asked the Chartered Company's secretary what connexion, if any, there was between the military activity in Rhodesia "and the intention of Johannesburg, which I took to be known to everybody, to rise. After some hesitation, Mr. Harris informed me that there was a certain connexion; and he then laid before me the Jameson plan."2 Harris seems to have had little difficulty in securing Flora Shaw's advocacy, at any rate, for the Uitlander case. A leading article on conditions in the Transvaal, which appeared on October 10, was enough proof of a sympathetic standpoint. Written in moderate language, it dealt only with the grievances of one side in the dispute. In October Kruger had alienated opinion in Cape Town and London by closing the drifts across the Vaal River to goods carried over the Cape and Free State Railway, in order to throw the carrying trade of the gold fields entirely into the hands of the Netherlands Railway Company. which was, for practical purposes, the Government railway of the Transvaal.<sup>3</sup> The Times condemned Kruger's action as

but the continuance of a course of repressive measures, by which the endurance of the *uitlander*, or foreign, population of the Transvaal has notoriously been brought almost to its limits. Already this population, to which the South African Republic owes its sudden

 <sup>1</sup> The bills to the amount of £61,000 and £200,000 were footed by the Chartered Company but repaid later by Rhodes and Beit respectively.
 2 Evidence of Miss Shaw before the Select Committee on British South Africa,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Evidence of Miss Shaw before the Select Committee on British South Africa, Question 8874.
<sup>3</sup> The drifts were reopened in November after an ultimatum from Chamberlain.
Kruger's "climb down" spread a wide impression that he might yield further ground-

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prosperity, and from which nine-tenths of the public revenue is derived, numbers about 60,000 adult males . . . the adult males of the native Dutch population number 15,000. Notwithstanding this preponderance, alike in numbers and in wealth, the *uitlander* population remains wholly without recognition in the State.

The paper rehearsed the grievances of the Uitlanders and gave warning that the situation could not be indefinitely prolonged. When " [a man's] public rights and his private interests are alike attacked, the restraining influences on which the peace of civilized societies depends are dangerously weakened." This first reference on the leader page to the injustice of Kruger's treatment of the Uitlanders was not due entirely to Harris's influence. To a considerable extent it expressed the feeling general in the country. There had been a change. In 1888 The Times correspondent recognized Kruger's "remarkable common sense" in dealing with the gold mines and declared that "his dealings with the crowd of new-comers to the goldfields are both wise and liberal." But that his policy towards the Uitlanders had since grown progressively harsh was undeniable. Miss Shaw laid the blame upon Kruger and emphasized his responsibility for the economic difficulties of the "outraged mining communities." This was a perfectly genuine expression of Miss Shaw's independent judgment. Her interest in Imperial affairs was as much economic as political; as has been seen, her first article in The Times was on Egyptian finance.

Bell's Imperial interests were broader. He was just as aware as his colonial expert of the economic importance of South African interests, but he took into consideration the political implications of the British position. His conclusion, arrived at in the autumn, was that things were developing so fast as to require the sending out of a special correspondent. Early in November, 1895, he sent a telegram to Captain (later Sir) Francis Younghusband, asking him to call at Printing House Square. Younghusband was home on leave after the Chitral Expedition, where he had acted as special correspondent of *The Times*. He dined twice with Bell, Flora Shaw being present on the second occasion. Beyond carrying a worried expression in the house, Bell gave no outward sign of any intentions or plans of his own. It was plain to his household, nevertheless, that there was a mystery and that he was involved in it. He had learnt

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The economic difficulties affected the smaller companies more than the large associations. During his examination by Blake, Rhodes agreed that for the last two years the Consolidated Gold Fields Company had paid a dividend of 125 per cent. a year, and the capital was valued in the market at nearly £8 for £1. (Report of the Select Committee on British South Africa, Question 848.)

November Bell began to show extreme preoccupation with South African affairs. On the day following Younghusband's second visit to the house, he told Mrs. Bell that "he has more responsibility than any man in England." He could say no more. Younghusband was instructed to see Rhodes about the prospects of "floating the new company" and to consult the "directors" in Johannesburg. On November 21 Bell sent him a code for transmitting important and secret messages. In doing so he made an emphatic and journalistic demand: "I want to impress upon Rhodes that we hope the New Company will not commence business on a Saturday." As a postscript he added, "Because of Sunday papers"—Bell was in no mind to miss what the newspaper trade calls an "exclusive" in such a sensational "flotation."

Younghusband duly arrived at the Cape in the beginning of December, 1895. He saw Cecil Rhodes, and straightway went up to Johannesburg to stay in the house of Rhodes's brother, Colonel Frank Rhodes. He next got in touch with Charles Leonard and Lionel Phillips and learnt their plans. Younghusband formed the opinion that the average miner of the Rand bothered little about the question of the franchise but was deeply interested in the continuance of the large wage he was regularly receiving. There was nothing like a revolutionary upsurge, and no immediate necessity for expensive cables from the Transvaal.

But, in spite of Younghusband's low estimate of the chances of a popular revolution, *The Times* kept the cause of the Uitlanders to the front. On December 16 Flora Shaw devoted a column and a half of her weekly article to their grievances, calling the Transvaal "the last home and refuge of patriarchal despotism" and giving the warning again that "the term of this period is approaching." The article claimed that even some of the Boers themselves were showing signs of a more liberal spirit than that manifested by Kruger's government, and that an opposition party was being formed in the Rand. Newcomers, mainly English, were arriving in the Transvaal at the rate of 600 to 1,000 a week and yet this great, "heavily taxed," population had to choose between living in disorder "impossible to tolerate in a community which is by nature and tradition

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mrs. Bell's diary, November 16, 1895.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Labouchere forced Leonard to admit that his annual income averaged £10,000 a year, upon which he paid about £150 in direct taxation. (Report of the Select Committee on British South Africa, Question 8081.)

law abiding" and providing their administrative services out of their own pockets.

To this black picture of Transvaal affairs Miss Shaw added the detail that the Chief Secretary of the Boer Government, Dr. Levds, passed through London on Saturday, December 14. on his way to the Continent for a throat operation. 1 Miss Shaw's article was backed up on the leader page by Wallace, for whom the Transvaal was "an islet of blind, uncompromising conservatism of the medieval type, with which even the most retrograde of our old Tories would feel ashamed to sympathize." referred to the "modest demands" of the settlers-" on the whole an orderly, industrious set of people, who evidently wish to avoid violent methods of action." Readers may well have wondered at this sudden attack on Kruger and whether the visit of Dr. Leyds had provoked it. It was the first piece of powerful pleading for the Uitlanders in the paper.2 The leader marks the ascendancy in the counsels of The Times of the view of South African affairs held by Bell and Flora Shaw.

Meanwhile Rutherfoord Harris had come to the conclusion that he had done all he could in England. By the end of November, he was determined to return to South Africa. Better than Bell, even than Flora Shaw, Harris knew that incidents at Johannesburg were probable in the very near future. Harris was anxious to arrive at the Cape before these events could take place. He and Alfred Beit sailed on November 29. On arriving at Capetown on December 17, they heard from Rhodes himself that there had been difficulties in carrying through the arrangements. It seemed by no means certain that the Uitlanders would revolt at all. Difficulties had been encountered in Johannesburg. The revolutionary mood into which Rhodes had brought the "reforming" delegates in October had passed. Jameson had been compelled to prepare something like a formal justification of any march he might take it upon himself to order. The reformers showed great reluctance to do anything so definite as to sign an appeal for help. Jameson's argument, which convinced them, was that he needed the appeal to justify

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Miss Shaw had an interview with Leyds and formed her own opinion as to the reason for his journey to Holland and Germany.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The change in editorial policy was noticed by Montagu White, Consul-General in London for the South African Republic. In a letter published on January 30, 1899, he accused the paper of changing from impartiality to misrepresentation of the Boer case on about December 16, 1895, and of joining the "jingo" crusade on that date. He was answered in a leader which ignored the date of the supposed change in policy, and quoted the three special articles on the Boers (sympathetically written by H. A. Bryden, and published on December 28, 31, and January 1) as an exoneration from the charge. The Times maintained that the paper's policy remained unaltered—cooperation between Dutch and English.

#### HESITATION IN JOHANNESBURG

himself later with the Chartered Company's directors, who had been kept in ignorance of the use being made of their resources. Jameson thus persuaded Leonard, as manifesto-maker of the committee, to write an appeal describing the "smouldering discontent" of the Uitlanders, asserting the probability of a rising, and pointing out the consequent terrible danger which would threaten "thousands of unarmed men, women, and children of our race," and—this was the point—begging Jameson to come to their aid if a disturbance should arise. The "letter" was written "with the running pen," Leonard later admitted. The writing and signing of this "letter" occurred about November 20.1 It was signed by the author, by Colonel Rhodes, Phillips, Hammond, and George Farrar. The "letter" was deliberately left undated. Carrying this "letter," Jameson returned four days later to Capetown to make the final arrangements with Rhodes. He showed him the "letter." Harris, too, was told of it.

Plans were at last taking definite shape. Doubts in the minds of Bell and Miss Shaw were laid to rest by an exchange of telegrams between December 10 and 12 concerning the date when it was proposed to "commence the plans." On the 11th Rhodes wired Flora Shaw that the new year would be the time. On December 19, Harris's deputy, J. A. Stevens, sent a telegram to Jameson, in Rhodes's name, asking for a copy of the "letter," i.e., that mentioned in the foregoing paragraph, to be sent at once by registered post. Jameson complied and dated the copy "December 20," the day on which it was posted. It is not clear why he put this date to the copy. No letter written and posted in Johannesburg would be delivered to Pitsani in time to be posted to the Cape on the same day.

The "letter" did not really reflect the views of the reforming Johannesburg leaders. They had never been, and were not now, revolutionary. Phillips, who made a stirring speech in November at the opening of the new premises of the Chamber of Mines and warned the Boer Government that the patience of the Uitlanders was becoming exhausted, immediately hedged when Jameson insisted that the rising must take place at the end of the year. As the month of December went by, Jameson's eagerness to invade the Transvaal was stronger than ever while the will of the Johannesburg rebels to rise was weaker. Rhodes gave renewed assurances that immediately they rebelled

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This is the most probable date according to the evidence of Jameson, Harris, and the Reform leaders before the Select Committee on British South Africa, 1897.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For the texts of the telegrams from Flora Shaw to C. J. Rhodes, see Chapter X.

Robinson would rush up to mediate in their behalf. But there remained another matter vital to the success of the outbreak. The question of the flag to be flown divided the rebels. Some, who wanted merely to take part in a movement to reform the government of the Boer State and obtain what they felt were their rights, wished to use the Transvaal vierkleur; others, who wanted to drive out Kruger's government altogether, wished to fly the Union Jack; a third section, who were interested in securing freer conditions for money-making, favoured the setting up of an independent republic. Rumours circulated that Rhodes, the great Imperialist, would insist on raising the British Flag in Johannesburg and that Jameson would support him in so doing. Hence it was necessary that a representative should go down to see Rhodes and explain the difficulty to him. Jameson must be dissuaded from crossing the frontier until the matter of the Flag was cleared up. The Johannesburgers looked round for a suitable envoy for such a vital mission. They chose The Times Special Correspondent, Captain Younghusband. He was just leaving for Capetown on other business; he was in the confidence of Rhodes himself; he was obviously the man to send.

Younghusband left Johannesburg on December 19 and reached Capetown on the 22nd. Rhodes murmured a good deal when the situation was explained to him. He was furious that the Uitlanders wanted to postpone the rebellion. "Is there no one in Johannesburg who will risk being shot and will lead the malcontents?" Younghusband had to tell him that there was no one willing to do this. "Then won't you do it?" asked Rhodes. "Do you mind risking being shot? Won't you lead them?" The Times correspondent replied that he had no interest in the proposed revolution and would not dream of leading it. Rhodes, seeing no alternative, promised to wire to Jameson telling him not to move and Younghusband returned to Johannesburg on Christmas Day accredited with a message from Rhodes to the effect that when the revolt did take place it must be under the British Flag. The conspirators were thus compelled to take awkward decisions. First, messengers from Colonel Rhodes were sent to Jameson telling him that there must be a postponement of plans. Secondly, on the same Saturday, December 28, Charles Leonard, and F. H. Hamilton, editor of the Johannesburg Star, were dispatched to the Cape. Rhodes gave these two delegates "satisfactory assurances that the Transvaal flag was at that time at all events not to be interfered with." Rhodes, regarding the whole matter from the British Imperial point of view, was not going ultimately to jeopardize

### YOUNGHUSBAND'S MISSION TO RHODES

his whole position in South Africa in order to create an independent state for the benefit of the mineowners. He was, on the other hand, ready to back a movement which might result in a federal union of British South Africa.<sup>1</sup>

The matter was also keenly followed at Printing House Square. On December 28, three days after Younghusband's return to Johannesburg, when it became obvious that the Uitlanders would not consider rebellion under the British Flag, Bell, at his private house, received from the correspondent the following telegram in the code arranged at the time of his appointment:

Your letter regarding British flag [.] feeling here is [policy] hoist colours drive Boer fight last man be resisted by whole Uitlander community [,] whose leaders have pledged themselves not unfurl if forced on them [.] dozen men could not be [successful] since that what people want simply representation in present Republic [.] but representation means predominant English influence and through exercising this power these are willing enter custom union with South African confederation [.] protection Queen Uitlanders recognize they must be under aegis England but they dislike government from London [.] Uitlanders want control over their internal affairs foreign relations they will submit to control of protectionist seeing how to thrust British ensign upon them would only estrange Uitlanders that on present line of struggling for political emancipation in existing republic they are fighting in just cause and seeing them realize how dependent they are upon British and how in consequence inclined to draw close England eventually if she does not force herself upon them [,] is not best policy to let matter follow present course [?] product of movement will be British colony in all but name eventually name too may come.

Younghusband's cable ended with the significant words: "action postponed for present"; and Bell conferred with Flora Shaw regarding his reply. The reply ran: "Your suggested policy approved will Paul grant franchise without fighting," and he concluded "what date expect now?"

Bell, it is obvious, was one of the informed activist group. He was now impatient. He had made careful dispositions in connexion with the expected news of a revolution in South Africa. To Madame Couvreur, *The Times* correspondent in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Flag question had earlier been raised in London. Rhodes's known dislike of interference from the Colonial Office led some of his supporters in England to think he intended to set up an independent state in the Transvaal. Rutherfoord Harris reported these doubts to Rhodes, who cabled to him on November 6, 1895: "As to English flag they must very much misunderstand me at home. I of course would not risk everything as I am doing excepting for British flag." (Report of Select Committee on British South Africa, Appendix No. 14, III, 9.)

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Brussels, who had written to say that she was going to Amsterdam, he wrote on December 23:

I have however wired you that I want you to remain at The Hague until further orders. In fact as you force me to be explicit The Hague is the place at which I wish you to be useful to us and if you will please return there you shall soon be informed why. Meanwhile I have to beg you to be very cautious not to create the impression that you are there except as an accident and for the sake of studying Dutch politics as to which we are up to the present badly informed.<sup>1</sup>

Others beside Bell were irritated by the vacillation of the reformers. Jameson bombarded them and Rhodes with threats that delay would ruin the whole plan. Colonel Rhodes had made his military preparations in Johannesburg. Yet on December 26 Younghusband cabled that the National Union of Uitlanders had issued one more reforming manifesto, which laid down a nine-point programme based on equality for all the inhabitants of the Boer republic. Further, it was announced that the next meeting of the Union was postponed from December 27 to January 6, to give the people of Johannesburg time for reflection on the manifesto. This postponement carried with it the postponement of any unconstitutional action until after that date. Action in the Jameson sense was in any case delayed by the question of the Flag which was still outstanding on December 26. Nevertheless, the unrest in the town continued during Christmas week, rumours of secret arming at the mines increased, yet the general opinion was against the use of force, which would mean closing the mines. The Mercantile Association with other bodies of moderate views announced that they would take no part in any disturbance. On December 27 The Times devoted a leading article to Leonard's manifesto of the day before and praised the practical good sense of the committee in postponing their meeting to give time for cool reflection. It was admitted that Kruger's position was difficult, but the paper insisted that he must yield since the Transvaal was not a Sovereign State. The Uitlanders were given no encouragement in the leading columns to proceed to unconstitutional action—"the possibility of disturbances in the Republic would be regarded with deep regret in this country, if ever it had to be faced," wrote The Times. Younghusband assured The Times in a cable on December 28 that "while some advocate a resort to force if the concessions be not granted, the majority of the people are against this course." The Transvaal moved

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Madame Couvreur had dined with Bell and Miss Shaw on June 25, 1895.

## WAITING FOR THE "FLOTATION"

up into first place in the foreign news columns. These columns reported from Berlin the interest taken there in the "insatiable ambition of Mr. Cecil Rhodes, the Napoleon of South Africa."

If neither in Johannesburg nor in London was it officially taken for granted that an explosion simply must take place soon or late, there remained those of a more politically zealous and optimistic temperament who were bent upon action. Bell struggled with doubt and expectancy as the old year slowly went out. Rhodes had told Flora Shaw to look for action at about the New Year. But would Rhodes and Jameson act?

For his part Jameson at Pitsani was determined not to let the authorities at Johannesburg or Cape Town lose what he considered the opportune moment for an armed demonstration against Kruger. He wired to Harris on Friday, December 27. that if the Johannesburg Uitlanders did not move "we will make our own flotation with help of letter, which I will publish."1 On the same day Jameson wired to J. H. Hammond for his approval to march. Hammond immediately answered "Experts' reports decidedly adverse. I absolutely condemn further developments at present." The next day, Saturday, December 28, Jameson sent an exasperated wire to Harris saying that if the reformers were left to themselves there would be "no flotation," and asking Rhodes's permission to move. Within an hour of its receipt Harris telegraphed back instructions to Jameson to await the messengers who, it has been seen<sup>2</sup> were sent to him by special train from Colonel Rhodes. During the same Saturday Harris sent further telegrams saying that Leonard and Hamilton (of the Star) had informed them that the movement was not popular in Johannesburg and that "all our foreign friends are now dead against it and say public will not subscribe one penny towards it even with you as a director. Ichabod." Jameson answered Harris at five the same Saturday afternoon that he would leave next day, i.e., the 29th, unless he heard definitely to the contrary. Rhodes should have received this ultimatum within an hour or two and would have done so, but that it was addressed to the Chartered Company's office. The only name Jameson would regard as authoritative was that of Cecil Rhodes: or, to a less extent, of Frank Rhodes.

Cecil Rhodes, who had thought out the plan, had since hesitated. Now he had reached certainty. Rhodes's interview with Leonard

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cape Report Appendix CC. Telegram No. 06365. The "letter," as it is called here, was known to contemporaries as the "women and children letter," or the "letter of invitation." For the circumstances in which it was written, see above, p. 173.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See supra, p. 174.

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and Hamilton on Saturday, December 28, convinced him that the Reformers were not men of action in his meaning of the word. They saw no real justification for rebellion, and he realized that no unnecessary military adventure would be undertaken by them. Rhodes told Sir Graham Bower, the Imperial Secretary to the High Commissioner, that the revolution at Johannesburg had fizzled out like a damp squib and that he could so inform the High Commissioner. Bower saw Robinson on Sunday, December 29, and drafted for him a telegram for dispatch to Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary. It informed him that the movement at Johannesburg had collapsed. Internal divisions among the leaders would now probably compel them to make the best terms they could with Kruger.

Thus, all things considered, Rhodes and Harris were justly confident on Saturday evening that no immediate incident was to be expected. Rhodes was at Groote Schuur, five miles from the Chartered Company's offices; Harris lived two miles in the other direction. Neither left instructions to forward any telegrams. and thus Jameson's ultimatum dispatched to "Rhodes, Charter. Cape Town" at five o'clock on Saturday afternoon lay all night in the office. Meanwhile Jameson was still at Pitsani proceeding with his organization. He laboured to prepare a troop ready to march at a moment's notice. As the hours passed he became more certain that "flotation" was due to take place immediately. Late on Saturday, Captain Holden, one of the men sent by Colonel Rhodes, delivered his message of postponement. At half past eight the next morning, when Jameson was sitting in his tent pondering the next step, he was disturbed by the arrival of Major Heany, Colonel Rhodes's second messenger. He was an old fellow-campaigner with Jameson. He read him the Committee's instructions. Jameson listened and went out of his tent for a short time. He then came back and said: "I am going in; and you—what will you do?" "Go in with you," replied Heany. That was all that appears to have been said. At 9.5 on Sunday morning Jameson dispatched his final message to Cape Town:

From Jameson, Pitsani, to Harris, Charter, Cape Town.

December 29, 1895.

Shall leave to-night for the Transvaal. My reason is the final arrangement with writers of letter was that, without further reference to them, in case I should hear at some future time that suspicions have been aroused as to their intentions amongst the Transvaal authorities, I was to start immediately to prevent loss of lives as letters

#### JAMESON CROSSES THE FRONTIER

state. Reuter<sup>1</sup> only just received. Even without my own information of meeting in the Transvaal, compel immediate move to fulfil promise made. We are simply going to protect everybody while they change the present dishonest Government, and take vote from the whole country as to form of Government required by the whole.

At Cape Town, it was only at 11 o'clock on Sunday morning, December 29, that J. A. Stevens called to see if there were any urgent messages. Stevens decoded them and rushed with Jameson's telegram to Harris. The Secretary sent him back to the telegraph office to ring Mafeking while he, himself, took over Stevens's cab and drove post-haste to Groote Schuur. While Stevens was discovering that the Mafeking telegraph office only opened for a short period on Sunday mornings, and that he could get nothing through, Harris was working with Rhodes on the text of a new wire to Jameson. After a delay of several hours, he returned and gave Stevens the new wire. It counselled Jameson to have patience, and it said authoritatively enough at the end, "On no account whatever must you move. I most strongly object to such a course." Stevens rushed this wire to the Cape telegraph office. By then the wires to Mafeking had been cut. Late that evening connexion<sup>2</sup> had not been restored and Stevens was told it was useless to leave the message with the telegraph office. Thus Jameson never received Harris's countermand.

On the same Sunday afternoon, December 29, 1895, Jameson paraded his troops and read them a portion of the "letter." Shortly after sunset he and his men set off. They crossed the Transvaal frontier and arrived at Malmani early on Monday morning, where they were joined by Major Raleigh Grey and his force from Mafeking. Together they went forward into Kruger's territory. The consequences were pregnant for Africa and for Europe. The emotions of all the Powers were immediately stirred and the reactions led to an abrupt hardening in the attitude of the Foreign Department at Printing House Square toward all Continental groups. Simultaneously *The Times* was forced to reconsider its Far Eastern Policy.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Reuter message was dated December 28 and stated that Johannesburg was agitated by persistent rumours of warlike preparations and that women and children were leaving the Rand. Jameson inferred from it that the plans of the reformers were no longer secret.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The wires between Mafeking and Vryburg were cut on Sunday by Jameson's orders. Communication was not restored until about noon next day, long after Jameson had left.

# VIII

# MIDDLE EAST AND FAR EAST TO 1899

THE Foreign Department had undergone its complete reorganization between 1891 and 1895. During these years there had occurred, independently of Egyptian and South African complications, a distinct evolution of outlook. The process had. in fact, begun years earlier. Some time before the Congress of Berlin, John Walter III began to desert Chenery's older-fashioned Turcophile views. The new tendency, which entailed a revision of the paper's attitude towards Russia, was strengthened when, upon the advice of William Stebbing (the Assistant Editor) Mackenzie Wallace was offered the St. Petersburg correspondentship of The Times. He accepted on July 5, 1877. The new correspondent, who already had many friends in Russia. staved in St. Petersburg for only a brief and not very happy period. Official relations between England and Russia were still bad, when Wallace was succeeded at St. Petersburg by George Dobson, a member of a family that had made its home in Russia in the eighteenth century.

For Walter and for Wallace, Russia was an Asiatic as well as a European Power and it by no means followed that the attitude adopted by *The Times* towards the two aspects of Czardom should be identical. This was understood long before Wallace became director of the Foreign Department at Printing House Square. As far as Central Asia was concerned, *The Times* maintained towards Russia the inflexibility it had inherited from Chenery. During 1884-1885, the paper did so with such determination even after the settlement which Granville effected, that the Foreign Secretary wrote to ask Walter for some modification in its vigour. But the hostility persisted. Thus in 1887, the Russophile *Pall Mall Gazette* of June 10, complained that when Russia, having occupied Kerki, "a little village of four hundred houses," Arminius Vambéry was allowed "as usual in *The Times*"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In the circumstances described supra at pp. 133 ff.

<sup>2</sup> May 29, 1885; C. G. Fitzmaurice, Life of the Second Earl of Granville (London, 1905), II, 444.

#### WALLACE'S ATTITUDE TO TURKEY AND RUSSIA

to prove that the latest move was fatal to English interests in Central Asia.

It had been MacDonald's belief that firmness towards Russia nowhere implied risks to peace. For one thing, the Berlin money market would be ruined if Russia engaged in a great war, as "nearly the whole of the £300,000,000 Russian foreign debt is now held in Berlin." . . . If, in the speculations of politicians such a consideration is apt to be lost sight of, said MacDonald.1 it is none the less vital to the understanding of the Russian position, whether European or Far Eastern, in Turkey or in China. China was opened to European trade in the middle of the century. Britain's naval supremacy and judicious acquisition of coaling stations secured for her a strategic predominance in the Eastern waters: her commercial interests in the Chinese Empire rapidly became far greater than those of any other Power but her territorial ambitions were relatively much slighter. France, however, was quick to establish a foothold in South China. Russia pushed forward into Eastern Siberia.

Into this situation entered the new and impredictable force represented by the modernization of Japan; that country was not yet a Great Power but she was already recognized as nursing territorial ambitions. Simultaneously, French aims in Indo-China expanded, Russia continued to press her claims, and to the concern of Britain, southward, i.e., in search of a warm water port. As the combination of Russian, French and Japanese pressure exposed the cracks in the Chinese Empire it became the fashion to adopt Middle Eastern phraseology and to talk of the "sick man of Asia." Britain with no ambitions other than the maintenance of her coaling stations, upheld the integrity of the Chinese Empire just as she had wanted to maintain the Ottoman Empire; but from the start it was an optimistic policy whose practicability was never obvious; and, in the second place, it was not clear what policy should be pursued if its practicability were disproved. The great Empire's weakness, and the unreality of British policy, were both demonstrated by the Sino-Japanese war of 1895; which, incidentally, showed that the two Far Eastern Powers would not then combine against European interlopers. Russia, moreover, was still pressing relentlessly. France's quarrel with China in 1883 over

<sup>1</sup> MacDonald to Brinsley Richards, November 18, 1886. (M. 20/859.) Cf. B.D 29/179: C. S. Scott, Ambassador at Berlin, to Sir Charles Sanderson, March 28, 1885, reported that Bleichröder was deep in the great Chancellor's confidence and was also himself deeply interested financially in Russia, having been the House which furnished her last loan, on Bismarck's assurance that peace in Europe had been secured, and that Russia would not embark on war.

## MIDDLE EAST AND FAR EAST TO 1899

Annam had set a direct conflict in train. The Times, with a recognized supremacy in Chinese information since 1859, when George Wingrove Cooke accompanied Lord Elgin's Mission, and with a range of interest which coincided with the whole of that of British commerce, at once saw the necessity to appoint a Special Correspondent to set out for the East to report the conflict.

On the question at issue between France and China, MacDonald consulted Macartney, Secretary to the Chinese Legation in London. "The substance of what I got out of him you will find in a leader in Tuesday's Times."1 This leading article, dated June 26, 1883, showed a clear understanding of the danger implicit in the controversy, i.e., if France conquered Annam other Chinese dependencies might soon afterwards be detached from the Empire. Russia coveted Korea and Japan the Foochow Islands. The inference drawn, however, was not that a dissolution inimical to British interests would at once set in : only that such a prospect naturally made China unwilling to start the process by ceding Annam to France. Great Britain wanted war averted because it would dislocate trade. Hence The Times favoured Russian mediation, since Russia was then the only Power in a position to undertake the task. War broke out. nevertheless, and resulted in the French acquisition of Annam. The Special Correspondent of The Times, A. R. Colguhoun. met with much opposition from the French commanders, yet on his return he admitted far stronger apprehensions of Russian than of French ambitions. Colquhoun was much impressed by the virtues of Li Hung Chang and favoured the increase of British influence by the financing of Chinese railways. "At present," he wrote, "we are only on the skirts of China, with only one shaft driven into the heart of the country, the Yangtze."2 Altogether Colquhoun saw British prestige in the Far East as declining and he advocated a forward policy. British good offices, he thought, could bring Japan and China together; an Anglo-Chinese alliance would be welcomed in China and under British guidance the Chinese Empire could revive. China could also crush the Russians if her army were trained by British officers and "Russia would thus be rolled back beyond the Amur." For Colquhoun, Russia was the great menace to British interests in the East.3

For nearly a decade The Times, more or less cautiously, was

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> MacDonald to Colquboun, June 28, 1883. (M. 20/545.)

<sup>2</sup> A. R. Colquboun: The Opening of China. Six letters reprinted from The Times (1884).

<sup>3</sup> A. R. Colquboun, English Policy in the Far East, being The Times Special Correspondence (1885). Colquboun (1848-1914) became an administrator under Rhodes and later travelled extensively but did not rejoin The Times.

#### THE TIMES CORRESPONDENTS IN CHINA

guided by the basic principles of Colquhoun's doctrine. For its own sake, and on account of India, peace in the Far East was a supreme British interest, while Russia in Asia was the greatest danger equally to peace, to India and to the Far Eastern Powers. In addition Colquhoun, who thought that Count Ito, the Japanese signatory to the Treaty of Tientsin and later Prime Minister, and Li Hung Chang were bound together by ties of strong personal friendship, 1 was optimistic about the ultimate prospect of Sino-Japanese amity. Thus the keystone of Colquhoun's peace policy was that Japan and China could and should be brought together. But J. W. McCarthy had already perceived that Korea was a likely source of hostility between the two countries. He argued at the end of 1885 that Great Britain ought to seek actively to prevent the Korean matter from coming to a head. "It is for the interest of Great Britain not only that Japan and China should be at peace, but also that they should be strong and united to resist external aggression as well as to maintain order within their own border."2 The two Far Eastern correspondents whom The Times maintained after the Franco-Chinese war, which ended in 1885, A. Michie at Tientsin and Colonel Palmer in Japan, were active observers but they do not appear to have kept the paper very well informed of the relations between China and Japan. At home MacDonald was in touch with Far Eastern problems and understood them better perhaps than many at home. He watched keenly the interaction of European politics and events in such distant Asiatic regions. During a Bulgarian crisis he wrote to Colonel Palmer: "Eastern Europe is getting black with war clouds at present and if Russia gets into a fight, they tell me that China will seize the opportunity and try and get back some of her lost territory. In that case would Japan leave her a free hand and are the relations of the two countries fairly good at present?" Thus The Times in MacDonald's period thought it necessary to build up its sources of Russian and Mid-Asiatic news. In Bell's period the paper followed the same policy. It was a policy that Wallace could be relied upon to assist. For him any serious understanding of the factors in foreign policy must take into account the East no less than the West. Although his personal experience went no farther than Russia, the Near East and India, Wallace never forgot the significance of China and Japan. He encouraged his subordinates. particularly Chirol and Morrison, to study Far Eastern affairs, and to secure for The Times the fullest possible documentation regarding Oriental movements.

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Russia and England in Asia" (The Times, December 2, 1885).

<sup>2 &</sup>quot;China, Japan and Corea" (The Times, December 31, 1885).

Wallace was invited to assume his new responsibility simultaneously with the dismissal of Bismarck by William II, whose views regarding Russia, then exerting pressure in the Balkans. differed widely from those of his Chancellor. " If Bismarck will not act against the Russians, our ways must part," the young Kaiser had said in May, 1889. In August of that year William paid a visit to England, was given an unprecedented welcome and appointed Admiral in the Royal Navy. The Czar, Alexander III, suspicious of such moves, visited Berlin in October, 1889. By the New Year, there were rumours of a Russian move towards Bulgaria and of friction between William and Bismarck. In March, the Kaiser told the military chiefs that Russia was about to occupy Bulgaria and that he would keep his word to Austria. On March 20 Bismarck was dismissed. It was necessary to take seriously a Kaiser who could act thus. The Times adopted the policy of steering a steady course friendly to both Germany and Russia. On March 31 the Russian Ambassador learnt that, contrary to what had been understood, the "Reinsurance Treaty," now due for renewal, would not be renewed.1 The German anti-Bismarckians, in particular Holstein, argued that the "Reinsurance Treaty" was incompatible with the security of the Triple Alliance and that its existence as a secret from the other two Powers gave Russia the power to reveal it and thus to disrupt the Alliance and isolate Germany. With non-renewal Russia was isolated. It was unthinkable to the anti-Bismarckians (however obvious it was to others) that she would seriously try for an arrangement with republican France or democratic England. Autocratic Russian interests were irreconcilable with those of the Western Powers.

In August, 1890, the Kaiser was again in England. The Heligoland Treaty had just been signed and the atmosphere in London was friendly to Germany and cordial to the Kaiser but it was already realized in Printing House Square that the new Kaiser and his policy of the "new course" necessitated an increased attentiveness to foreign questions. In the same August, the Kaiser visited the Czar with the obvious intention, it was thought in the office, of moderating the alarms of a collision. But any pacific pledges given by Germany could never mean indifference towards Russian designs for fresh embroilments in the Balkans. The German alliance with Austria forbade anything of the kind. In sum, *The Times* argued on August 25: "While the Czar does not plan war, and the Emperor William forbids it,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 141, supra.

## THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION 1890-1891

Europe can count on a respite." The paper had no relish for a struggle with Russia.1

This was the background against which Wallace dined with Buckle at the Athenaeum to talk over "the idea" of his coming into the office as a specialist with responsibility for foreign affairs.2 The atmosphere in London towards the young Kaiser had been cordial. The Times, also, was pleased, believing as it did that Russian aggression in the Balkans, the Middle East and the Far East was setting a serious strategical problem before the British Empire. The paper recognized the fact that England and Germany needed each other. The significance of the departure of Bismarck was not vet apparent. Russia, however, was quick to see the possibility of a more aggressive German policy and also the possibility of its receiving the blessing of Britain. In St. Petersburg there was no doubt of the isolation of Russia, where the Anglo-German rapprochement, as it seemed, convinced the Czar of his urgent necessity of an ally. The obvious choice was France. Both Powers had a common interest in checking British progress in the Middle East and in the Far East. This fact rendered the combination of special concern in London, where the need to forestall Russian moves towards Constantinople was always and principally in mind. The Germans of course did nothing to allay British fears on this score, and sought to follow up the advantage of the Italo-British agreement concerning the Mediterranean by inducing Britain to see the advantage of associating herself more closely with the Triple Alliance. This being the atmosphere surrounding the French naval visit to Kronstadt on July 24, 1891, Salisbury made up his mind to invite the French fleet to visit Portsmouth on its return to Brest.

Meanwhile, indefinite and protracted Franco-Russian discussions were proceeding, simultaneously with pressure upon Britain in Central Asia. There, with the object of blocking Gladstone's Bulgarian policy, the Russians pushed back Captain Francis Younghusband's expedition of autumn, 1891, in the Pamirs. Inevitably, the resulting friction had the effect of in-

<sup>1</sup> On August 30, 1890, The Times printed a column review of its correspondent George Dobson's Russia's Railway Advance into Central Asia (London, 1890), based upon his letters to the paper during 1888. The Times laid stress upon the danger of these railways to "our political security in India and Afghanistan and our commercial predominance in Southern Asia." Dobson's book emphasises the ease with which the Russians identify themselves with the Asiatic peoples they conquer, and describes it as a "remarkable faculty"; and The Times reflects that "it is not probable that it would ever be worth our while to make a serious and systematic attempt to expel Russia from Central Asia, and to confine her to the West of the Caspian and the steppes north of the Jaxartes." The paper hoped that Dobson's book would be read at Pekin.

2 See Chapter VI, p. 134.

# MIDDLE EAST AND FAR EAST TO 1899

creasing Russian dependence upon her neighbours, i.e., upon the good will of Berlin; and, as a further consequence, of lowering the terms upon which St. Petersburg was ready to come to an arrangement with Paris.

In London attention now tended to be given rather to Russia in Asia than Russia in Europe. It was becoming evident that the position most satisfactory to Great Britain, i.e., the maintenance of the status quo and the peaceful development of Chinese economic resources, could not long survive increasing competition and pressure from Russia. What of the future? An answer was provided in 1892 by a young writer, later to be more famous as statesman than journalist, but already recognized as a more brilliant publicist than either of the regular Eastern correspondents of The Times. George Nathaniel Curzon, lately private secretary to Lord Salisbury and M.P. for Southport, had in 1889 paid for his travels in Persia by contributing letters to The Times; in 1892 he financed a journey round the world by making with the paper an agreement to describe the Oriental nations. The two series of articles, written from the places in question, made their appearance in The Times at the end of 1892 and the beginning of 1893. Curzon's standpoint was more expansionist than Colquhoun's; his book The Problems of the Far East, based on the articles in The Times, was dedicated, in a phrase that deeply impressed Printing House Square, "to those who believe that the British Empire is, under Providence, the greatest instrument for good that the world has seen." The writer added that Britain's work in the Far East had not yet been accomplished. Like Colguhoun, Curzon seemed to believe that the British task should be to undertake the organization of the Chinese Empire: the English, after making due allowance for the just ambitions of others, would find that "the best hope of salvation for the old and moribund in Asia, the wisest lessons for the emancipated and new, are still to be derived from the ascendancy of British character, and under the shelter, where so required, of British dominion."1

Curzon thought that as Chinese power would continue to wane, further losses of territory might be expected. He was less convinced than Colquhoun of Japanese good will towards the celestial empire and he had serious misgivings as to the Japanese character, which he regarded as inflated with pride and restless with ambition. Curzon, like Colquhoun, wished for Japanese and Chinese amity and the harmonization of the

<sup>1</sup> G. N. Curzon, The Problems of the Far East (London, 1896), preface.

## CURZON AS A "SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT"

interests of both empires by the action of Great Britain, who was able to assist the two countries in their mercantile and industrial development. Such an attitude "will strengthen China in a resistance, for which there is yet time, against the only enemy whom she has real cause to fear, and will facilitate our own commercial access to her territories by land." Again it was Russia who was the sole menace, Russian pressure on the northern frontier that was the one great danger. Curzon would not forecast the result of a Chinese-Japanese conflict but he did not hesitate to express his conviction that it would be the very worst thing that could happen: "The true policy for Japan, ignoring tradition and history and burying national antipathies, is a friendly understanding with China, interested like herself in keeping at a distance the single common perilnamely, the advance of the Muscovite from the north," and this. he thought, was understood by some Japanese statesmen.2

Thus Curzon, like Colquhoun, failed to observe signs of the imminent conflict; his principal advance upon Colquhoun was his juster estimate of Chinese weakness. Like him, Curzon formed an extremely favourable impression of Li Hung Chang. Perhaps the chief significance of Curzon's articles was to strengthen in London the fear of Russian progress. The Times hitherto had borne India in mind and had not been so greatly apprehensive of Russian activities farther east. There was now a change of emphasis. The Trans-Siberian Railway, for instance, was the subject of an article by F. Dillon Woon on April 3, 1891, although a leading article of May 26, 1891, still said nothing of the implications of the policy responsible for the laying down of the route. It was not until later that the Korean question began seriously to darken the horizon. In a special article of June 16, 1894, Curzon said, logically enough, that China and Japan would probably find a peaceful solution because both feared Russia; and a leading article of the 27th made the same point. "That is the termination of the quarrel which this country must desire. Korea, at all events, is far too rich in fine natural harbours and in other material resources for a Power with interests in the China seas such as ours to be able to contemplate with indifference any material change in her external relations." It was understood that in the negotiations China was taking a conciliatory line, while Japan was pressing on to extremes; it was only hoped that Japan would see the folly of her ways in time to meet the Chinese at the farthest point to which the latter would go and so avert war.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 398.

<sup>1</sup> G. N. Curzon, The Problems of the Far East (London, 1896), p. 419.

But on July 25, 1894, Japan attacked China and declared war on her on August 1. Logically, the attitude of *The Times* was hostile to Japan. That country had unwarrantably broken the peace. This view was reinforced by the publication on August 6 of a signed letter from Curzon which argued that hostilities had been deliberately started by the Japanese Government in order to deflect public attention from domestic troubles. Moreover, among the first acts of the Japanese navy was to sink a British ship. A leading article of September 4 asserted that the Japanese declaration of war, which accused China of aggression, was a tissue of lies, and concluded: "Whatever the causes of Japanese action may be, it is clear that they are neither the aggression of China nor a disinterested affection for Korea. Probably the present state of Japanese Parliamentary politics has a good deal more to do with the matter."

In the circumstances, the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, which abolished British jurisdictions in Japan, was received with distinctly qualified approval by The Times. (September 18, 1894.) Wallace's private opinion was more friendly than that expressed in the paper, although he remained apprehensive of Japanese lack of moderation. As early as February, 1894, he wrote: "I confess I cannot help sympathizing with the Japanese in their desire to be master in their own house, so long as the feeling remains within legitimate bounds. If they are wise and refrain from excesses of all kinds they are pretty sure to win in the long run."1 Wallace was informed regarding the Japanese views by Baron von Siebold, a member of a family long prominent in interpreting Japan to Europe and himself, at this time, Secretary of the Japanese Legation in London. Siebold made the best of the leader on the treaty,2 and bombarded Wallace with material on the justice and moderation of Japanese aims.

Such arguments appear to have made only a slight impression until news of Japanese victories began to come in. The Times of October 9 published a long communication from its correspondent in Tientsin contrasting Chinese inefficiency with the "silent, concentrated energy" of Japan; a leading article judged that "the huge unwieldy empire seems to be threatened with dissolution by its own inherent rottenness." Shortly before this, Chirol, at Berlin, wrote privately to Wallace that the British Government were proposing joint mediation by the Powers; and

<sup>1</sup> Wallace to Kingdon, February 7, 1894. (F. 2/363.)
2 Siebold to Wallace, September 18, 1894: "I read with much interest your article on Treaty Revision. People will now say that the British Government were very farsighted in securing the good will of the Japanese by a timely concession—as they had a foresight that the Japanese would be victorious."

## THE SINO-JAPANESE WAR OF 1894

added that the German Government thought such an attempt would fail and were surprised that Great Britain should take the initiative in a step which Japan would certainly resent. Marschall and Holstein asked why

if you are really concerned for the independence of Korea, don't you leave it to the Russians to oppose its absorption by Japan? Surely you have no interest in removing what appears to be a certain source of friction between your great Asiatic rival and the rising power in the Far East. The traditional object of your policy in those regions has been to secure the best available ally against Russia. China shows herself to be useless for the purpose. Events seem to be driving Japan into your arms, and she looks like a parti worth having. Why go out of your way to outrage her? China is in such a plight that she would anyhow be thankful to you for far smaller mercies than such intervention as you appear to contemplate would constitute in her present situation.<sup>1</sup>

The German insistence that Russia was Britain's enemy in the Far East was rendered somewhat less valid by November, 1894, when an agreement with Russia settling the disputes regarding the Afghan and Pamir frontiers was concluded. The signature occurred simultaneously with the mortal illness of the Czar, Alexander III. *The Times* felt so much encouraged by the visit of the Prince of Wales to St. Petersburg, where he worked for a widening of the Afghan understanding, that the leading article in the paper of December 6, 1894, welcoming the return of the Prince, acclaimed him as, incidentally, an Ambassador Extraordinary.

Meanwhile, to the necessary task of safeguarding British interests against Russian pressure in the Near East and on the Indian borders, there was added an unexpected and deeply increased Far Eastern anxiety. It arose out of the sudden and astonishing Japanese victory in January 1895 over the Chinese. It was now realized as beyond all doubt that the Chinese Empire, like the Ottoman Empire, could never recover her position as a Great Power. Henceforth Britain must consider Japan as the dominant force in the Pacific. Into this situation any further arrangements with Russia would need to be fitted; and it was foreseen that arrangements due to Eastern circumstances would modify the conditions of British understandings with purely European Powers. It was accepted here that, despite pledges to China, Russia hankered after a secure and open harbour on the Pacific. The Times was foremost in laying emphasis on the con-

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Wallace, October 7, 1894. (C. U. L. Papers.)

# MIDDLE EAST AND FAR EAST TO 1899

tinuity of Russian policy in the Far East. In the new situation caused by the Chinese defeat the paper did not refrain from insisting that neither Britain nor Japan could view, without concern, Russian ambitions in those waters. But Russia, it appeared to the Japanese, was ready to consult the feeling of Britain. In consequence she began to take a keen interest in the possibility of a Russo-British understanding, and it soon became clear to Britain that the prospect of an understanding with the great Euro-Asiatic Power limited to arrangements regarding Far Eastern territories and waters, was not welcome to Japan. At the same time it became apparent that Germany, too, was disinclined to bless a Russo-British scheme which, however limited and provisional in its immediate character, had in it the possibilities of comprehensiveness to an unknown degree.

The German argument was of course not a little influenced by a desire to prevent an Anglo-Russian understanding regarding the Near East. Wallace had already seen that there was much in its favour, for he had at no time been impressed with the idea of an "eternal" Anglo-Russian enmity. His view is well illustrated by his action on the evening of October 9 when he penned a long memorandum telling the Assistant Editor in great detail how to treat the question of intervention by the Powers.1 A leading article corresponding with his advice appeared in The Times of October 10, 1894. The article could deal only in general terms with the question. It condemned absolutely all attempts to mediate, since failure was certain. "No European concert is possible to effect an end of that kind, since there would always be some Power ready to win the gratitude of Japan by standing aloof. On the other hand, the Power that took the initiative would make an enemy of the most powerful and progressive nation in the Far East, without advancing the cause of peace or humanity a single jot."2

In this leading article the development of doctrine within Printing House Square is made manifest: as against the proved energy of Japan was set the proved folly of China. The Times henceforward began to show more friendliness towards Japan. It was a tendency that suffered a temporary setback from the reports which came in during January, 1895, of the atrocities perpetrated by the Japanese at the capture of Port Arthur, and

<sup>1</sup> Wallace to Capper, October 9, 1894. (F. 2/684.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A very vigorous leading article openly condemned the Government's "premature interference" on October 16, by which date *The Times* assumed that the taking of the initiative by Great Britain was no longer a secret. The Government issued a semi-official denial, but *The Times* reiterated the statement—which, indeed, was true. (October 18, 1894.)

#### EUROPEAN ALARM AT JAPANESE VICTORY

although the reports were too well authenticated to be overlooked, *The Times* endeavoured to make them as little unpalatable as possible. The issue of the paper reporting them also included a description of Japanese Red Cross work, and the leading article (January 8) said that

Judged by the standards of the Far East the behaviour of the Japanese at Port Arthur may, of course, be pronounced natural and usual. The traditions of old Japan are of a somewhat sanguinary kind, and Chinese punishments are proverbial for their refined cruelty. But it is understood that modern Japan is ambitious of being placed upon a different level, and challenges judgment by wholly different standards.

On the evening that the above was written Wallace received from Siebold two documents which purported to prove that the Chinese Government had been contemplating an invasion of Japan ever since 1882 and that Japan in attacking first had only seized her most favourable opportunity for resisting Chinese aggression. These documents, it was hoped, might enable the British public, who thought Japan the aggressor, to see things more justly. I January 8 was not a suitable moment for presenting the Japanese case and Wallace held up the documents until January 19, when they were printed in extenso accompanied by a leading article. This leader did not accept the Japanese argument without reserve. China, it was admitted, had been preparing for war in 1882 in anticipation of "the suspected hostile designs of Japan"; but of the two documents published, the more warlike was the work of a statesman afterwards discredited, while that written by Li Hung Chang was studiously moderate.<sup>2</sup> On the assumption, which was not to be doubted, that Japan knew of the documents, there was nevertheless nothing "about which she could take reasonable alarm." The moral was simply that "each country was bound to prepare against the contingencies of an uncertain future, and for either of them to neglect precautions was little else than to invite attack. The warning involved in the situation has been given to both, but by one only has it been attended to and, unhappily for China, forewarned has not meant forearmed." Such a verdict registered, in effect, a definite qualification of the paper's earlier accusation of wanton aggression on the part of Japan.

<sup>1</sup> Siebold to Wallace, January 1, 1895, marked "Received January 7." (P.H.S. Papers.)
2 This no doubt explains why, as Wallace wrote, "one newspaper [The Observer], with its usual acumen, came to the conclusion that they (the documents) must have been supplied to us by Li Hung Chang!!!" (to Siebold, January 21, 1895; F. 2/825). The cool impartiality of this leader indeed gave little sign of Japanese inspiration; but its effect upon a British public which had hitherto believed in the complete innocence of China was not on that account the less telling.

# MIDDLE EAST AND FAR EAST TO 1899

But doubts regarding the spirit of the Japanese did not fail to find expression in The Times. Count Ito might be moderate but the "more aggressive type of politician" remained powerful and the evil passions of a misguided patriotic spirit prevailed among the people. The Times had early information of the probable terms of peace and persistently counselled moderation lest European Powers intervened. Yet when Japanese demands were known and seen to be by no means moderate, they were regarded sympathetically. Japan wished to take Port Arthur and the Liaotang peninsula, which was "practically a greater Gibraltar at the entrance to the Gulf of Pe-chi-li" and in consequence controlled the gateway to Tientsin and Peking. It was the view of the paper that "It does not appear that there is any reason why this country, at any rate, should interfere to prevent the cession of this small corner of outlying Chinese territory to Japan." (April 8, 1895.)

Such was not the opinion of other countries. France and Russia, with the conspicuous backing of Germany, took effective steps to frustrate Japanese ambitions.<sup>1</sup>

1 Chirol's view, expressed much later, of German motives was that they were not disinterested. His contribution to the Oxford War Pamphlets (1914-1918) affirms that if William II did not, as the Japanese firmly believed, actually instigate Russia to prevent Japan from reaping the fruits of her victory over China, he was prompt to lend his heartiest cooperation. When the statement was challenged by the Japan Chronicle [of Kobe] in its issue of September 22, 1922, Chirol (in a letter to the Editor of The Times published on December 15, 1922) supported his statement by a quotation from a passage in the Memoirs of Witte written on April 26, 1899, i.e., three days after the retrocession of Port Arthur to the Japanese. In his letter to The Times, Chirol acknowledged that he did not hold the view of "some of my shrewdest Japanese friends" whom he met on the occasion of his visit shortly after Shimonoseki. Chirol added that on his return to Berlin in the late autumn of 1895, Baron Holstein, "with whom I was then on terms of rather exceptional intimacy, . . . made a remark to me which opened my eyes to the true inwardness of German policy in the Far East, though it was a policy with which I was not altogether disposed to quarrel, except for its hostility to Japan, as British relations were still seriously strained in many parts of the world." Chirol asked Holstein why Germany had allowed herself to be dragged at the heels of Russia and France into joint intervention against Japan. Holstein replied that it was the other way round: Germany was not the sort of Power to be dragged at anybody's heels but "the opportunity was too good to be lost, of driving a German wedge in between Petersburg and Paris. The French disliked it immensely, but they simply could not afford not to come in. Baron Holstein declined any further elucidation." (The Times, December 15, 1922.)

When Chirol found himself dealing with Far Eastern affairs in his Fifty Years (London, 1927), he included an account of his meeting at Tientsin with Li Hung Chang, who represented China at Shimonoseki; and at pp. 190-1 described his interview a few days later with Count (afterwards Prince) Ito, the Japanese Prime Minister. Chirol here says he was struck by the moderation with which Ito discussed the intervention of the three Powers which succeeded in depriving Japan of some of the chief prizes of victory. He was convinced, he says, "and the events soon proved him to be right," that "Russia had vetoed the annexation of Port Arthur and the Liaotang peninsula to Japan because she was determined to have them sooner or later herself." The Prime Minister informed Chirol that the German Minister had "hinted to him" that his country, far from being hostile to Japan, only joined in the ultimatum in order to restrain Russia and France from more violent action. At this point Chirol adds (p. 191) that "By a curious coincidence, I had myself just received a letter from Berlin in which Baron Holstein, with whom I was at that time on very intimate terms, explained to me that Germany's action was chiefly intended to prevent the Franco-Russian alliance being demonstrated by joint salvos of artillery from French and Russian ships in the Far

East."

#### JAPANOPHILE TENDENCY OF THE TIMES

Baron von Siebold was much distressed that his country in the end should turn against Japan after long giving her support. His letter to Wallace on the subject should be read:

... The German Government after giving through the whole war to Japan every sign of sympathy has suddenly turned round and assumed the initiative in proposing to Russia and France a decisive action against the Japanese territorial annexations in the Asiatic Continent. It would be a mistake to attribute this entirely to the action or influence of von Brandt. There must be a deeper cause, and I conceive this in the alarm taken in the leading circles of the Foreign Office at the possibility of a joint Russo-French action in the East, as this might be followed by a subsequent similar action in Europe. Once, it is argued, the Russian and French fleets or landing forces have cooperated in the East-the "fraternité d'armes" might by a natural course of things be extended to Europe—and as it is not possible to separate the two friends, Germany has joined them and taken the lead. Add to this a strong undercurrent in favour of China always existing in the political circles of the Wilhelmstrasse, the Cassandra cries of Brandt, the chance of bringing home to the German nation the necessity of an increase of the navy, you have the total of motives which, with considerable promptitude and well supported by the official and semi-official Press, have been put into play.<sup>2</sup>

The enforced withdrawal of the Peace of Shimonoseki had the effect, as *The Times* forecast many months before, of arousing the hostility of Japan against Germany; while the one Power that stood aside, as also forecast by the paper, would be rewarded with Japanese good will. The paper expressed satisfaction that this Power should be Great Britain. The paper felt no anxiety at the threat of a German-French-Russian *entente*, since such an unnatural alliance could not, in its opinion, be permanent.

The Times came to a major conclusion in the spring of 1895: the Far Eastern world had been revolutionized by the result of the Japanese-Chinese war. The status quo could not be restored, and hence it was necessary not only to accept the new situation but to come to terms with it. More than once it had been hinted that England would not be able to remain neutral if freedom of trade with China was interfered with; but, as the paper was now pleased to observe, that did not appear to be the Japanese intention:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> German Minister in Peking, then back in Germany telling the German Emperor of the Yellow Peril. (Cf. P. Joseph, Foreign Diplomacy in China, 1928, p. 113.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Siebold to Wallace, Berlin, April 24, 1895. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.) The information which enabled *The Times* to accuse the German Government of instability (A German envoy was on the point of starting from Tokyo to hand over to the Mikado the gold chain of the Black Eagle, when Germany suddenly discovered that "friendly advice," however unpalatable, was more seasonable, &c., April 30) was drawn from this letter.

# MIDDLE EAST AND FAR EAST TO 1899

If China could have been guaranteed to remain in a torpid condition, if Japan had not suddenly awakened to a consciousness of her naval and military strength and begun to use it, we should, perhaps, have been better pleased to go on as we have done for two or three generations. But that is past praying for. A new world has been called into existence in the Far East. We must live with it and make the best of it. (April 23, 1895.)

The Times was prepared to advocate friendship with Japan ("Great Britain and Japan have no interests which are obviously in conflict" was the verdict as early as September 24, 1894), but the feeling was, as yet, no warmer. The news services in Japan were expanded and, although Palmer's successor in Tokyo, Captain Brinkley, was favourable to the Japanese Government, the supplementary correspondents at Kobe and Yokohama, characteristic representatives of the British merchant trade in Japan, were by no means Japanophile. Kingdon, the correspondent at Yokohama, told Wallace significant stories of the anti-European excesses of the "Soshi" and added the warning that "England may look forward to serious troubles in the near future, as Japan is an aggressive country and will not remain satisfied until it is the dominant Power in all Asia." Look, for example, he said, at the fact that

a serial story is being published in one of the principal native papers, with illustrations, representing Japan twenty years hence. It prophesies that Japan will then have taken from England India, Hong-kong and Gibraltar, and one of its illustrations depicts the British Ambassador on board a Japanese man of war suing humbly for peace.<sup>1</sup>

It was true that the Sino-Japanese war, as the leader of April 23, 1895, admitted, was a defeat for British policy. The strength thereby secured to Japan left Great Britain no longer unquestioned mistress of the Eastern Seas. That was the first major and most awkward consequence of the Japanese victory. Much, it was foreseen, would flow from that truth that must be as unpalatable as it was undeniable. A second awkward consequence was that the European Powers were now counting upon the break-up of the Chinese Empire, as they had been doing of the Ottoman Empire. If Great Britain was still the strongest Power in the East, the company of Japan, Germany, Russia, and France rendered that position distinctly unsure. Altogether, a new—and active—policy was seen to be necessary by those who wished England to retain her old lead in the new Far East.

<sup>1</sup> N. P. Kingdon to Wallace, April 18, 1895. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

## CONSEQUENCES OF THE JAPANESE VICTORY

At this point Chirol who was still posted to Berlin, but had been spending the winter of 1894-1895 in Egypt, received an invitation from Sir Nicholas R. O'Conor, British Minister in Peking, to pay a visit to this new Eastern world in the making. He obtained permission with some difficulty to desert his Berlin post for the necessary period, and made a journey that turned out to be of great significance to The Times and of vital consequence to his own political development. Hitherto Chirol had shown no interest whatever in Eastern affairs, although he was able on occasion to send important "exclusives" to Wallace on such topics. Henceforth the Berlin Correspondent was destined to rank as one of Britain's most zealous students of Eastern problems, and, in Printing House Square, the most persistent advocate of a vigorous British policy in those regions.

While on his first journey in the East in 1894-1895, Chirol wrote a number of articles for *The Times*, which he later collected in a volume entitled *The Far Eastern Question*. In the preface, which took the form of a dedicatory letter addressed to the Chief Proprietor of *The Times*, Chirol defined the war between China and Japan as having "inaugurated a new drama in the world's history, of which only the first act has so far been played." In its further development and ultimate consequences it "may reach into the home of every working man in this country."

Reference to the British "working man" and his home usually accompanied manifestations of the expansionist spirit in favour at Printing House Square at this period. Regarding Africa, direct British responsibility was encouraged. In China a different policy was sponsored. In Africa it was accepted that trade followed the Flag; in China, according to The Times, trade followed the price list; there must be dominion in Africa, but the "open door" in China. It was not the intention or the ambition to add China to the British Empire, although the implications of the general Far Eastern situation were bound to give Chinese questions front rank in Imperial considerations. In the body of his book. Chirol moved very tentatively from the accepted policy when he said that "If we are to hold our own in the Far East, it is upon ourselves alone that we must rely." He added at once that, notwithstanding, it was necessary to seek assistance. The massing of ships in the Yellow Sea had for the first time displaced the balance of sea power at a spot where Great Britain had hitherto held undisputed sway.

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The obvious ally to turn to was the United States. In the Far East, if anywhere, "might be laid the foundations of that close understanding between the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race which it must be the object of every far-seeing statesman on both sides of the Atlantic to promote and extend." There was also, of course, Japan; and Chirol took the Japanese side in the war-guilt controversy. England, he thought, should have restrained the Chinese, for Japan was not eager to start war; she was entirely blameless for having chosen the most favourable moment to frustrate Chinese plans. He had an interview with Li Hung Chang, and unlike Colquhoun and Curzon, came away with an unfavourable impression. As late as the spring of 1895, The Times saw in Li the one hope for China's salvation. Li was, as Chirol divined, able but altogether unscrupulous and untrustworthy; with Hayashi, the Japanese. on the other hand, Chirol got on exceedingly well.1

Yet he did not capitulate to the Japanese charmer.<sup>2</sup> He foresaw that circumstances might one day force Great Britain and Japan into opposition; on the other hand "for some time to come it looks at least probable that England and Japan may have to travel along parallel paths." Chirol then thought an Anglo-Japanese understanding the more necessary because the inherent "cynicism" of Japanese policy might point to the advantage of coming to terms with Russia for the dismemberment of China. With Franco-Russian hostility Great Britain had already to reckon as a hard fact. Here his view was that of Colguhoun and Curzon. Unlike them, however, Chirol saw France as the more intransigent partner and perhaps more dangerous neighbour, since British interests were greatest in the south where French territory was nearer to India and her ambitions were keenest. On the other hand, there was no insoluble conflict with Germany. Chirol thought she might be allowed to take a coaling station.3

On the solid foundations laid in Chirol's articles in *The Times* there was built up the policy that was to serve the paper for

<sup>1</sup> The Secret Memoirs of Count Tadasu Hayashi, edited by A. Pooley (1915), p. iii, is clearly to be trusted on this point. "Ever since [their meeting in Peking] I [Hayashi] have been in close contact with him [Chirol], and he has always heartily favoured the idea of an Anglo-Japanese alliance."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> He had reason: "More formidable even than the political dangers which threaten us from the Far East, and I have no wish to underrate them, appears to be the economic danger. The time is not far distant when not only ourselves, but industrial Europe altogether will rue the day when we introduced to the labour markets of the world the enterprising genius of Japan and the countless hosts of Chinese labour." Chirol to Bell, Peking, May 25, 1895. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> V. Chirol, The Far Eastern Question (1896), Chapter XIV, "Wanted an Imperial Policy."

# CHIROL ON THE FAR EASTERN QUESTION

many years to come, though not without some modifications. Among its features was the establishment of closer relations between Burma and the Southern Chinese provinces of Yunnan and Szechwan. Some such idea had originally occurred to Colquhoun and seems to have been elaborated by Michie at the beginning of 1893. Wallace, regretting Michie had not met Curzon when the latter was in the East, thus wrote to him:

Whether he could have materially helped you towards the realisation of your scheme of effecting a confidential rapprochement between the two Great Powers is another matter. On that point I am rather sceptical, because it seems to me that the intermediary would have to be a man intimately acquainted with India, and having abundance of time at his disposal. Curzon is deficient in both of these qualifications. . . . If I were free I should be tempted to come out and have a long talk with you on the subject myself, for your letter has interested me immensely, and I could at least explain to you how far the thing is feasible from the Indian side. I can see enormous difficulties but I am not prepared to say that they are insurmountable.

When Salisbury resumed office as Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary in July, 1895, he was disposed to tackle outstanding questions, but he was not of the new imperialist school and the Far Eastern question was of little interest to him. But his Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs was now G. N. Curzon, who, naturally enough, took a keen interest in these questionsand at times came into sharp disagreement with his chief. Equally, a close connexion between Curzon and The Times would have been natural. It was prevented by a couple of trivial incidents. Curzon began with a vigorous attack upon "lady geographers"—a sneer at Flora Shaw that Bell, above all others, would find it hard to forgive: later in the House of Commons he gibed at a correspondent of The Times. To the coolness consequent upon these ebullitions there was to be added the serious consideration that Bell was primarily interested in Egypt and South Africa. Wallace, too, was only the mildest of Imperialists and inclined to approve the wisdom of the aged Prime Minister rather than the eagerness of the young colleague. There was room, therefore, in the office for an authoritative specialist upon British interests in China. The Far East, consequently, became one of Chirol's subjects. He watched keenly all developments in those parts and took a detailed interest in every development that brought Britain into conflict with the Powers, in particular Russia, and the dissolving Chinese Empire.

<sup>1</sup> Wallace to Michie, January 20, 1893. (F. 1/756.)

To Salisbury, it was the affairs of the Turks that had become the urgent international issue. Their Empire was completely beyond hope. Salisbury's strong expressions of this opinion were not welcomed in Berlin, where Holstein's influence was, for the time being, paramount. He thought Salisbury wished to partition the Empire precisely in order to provide compensation for Russia and Italy, and thus neutralize their opposition to British policy regarding Egypt and the East. When, therefore, the Kaiser came to Cowes in August, 1895, and Salisbury took the opportunity to mention the danger of the Turkish dissolution. the German response was cold. The Kaiser's reply was that the conditions showed some improvement—which, as the Armenian atrocities proved, was hardly the case. And it was the Armenian situation that accounted for Salisbury's present policy. Germany. though inclined to disinterest herself in the fate of Constantinople. affected to share Russian suspicion of British design. nervousness regarding British action was increased when, at the beginning of November, 1895, British squadrons were concentrated at Lemnos. The Italians dispatched ships, and the Austrians openly offered their support to Britain. Germany was thus placed in the minority in the Triple Alliance, and Russia was compelled to ask for the support of France. The French reply was that her interest was confined to Alsace-Lorraine. In consequence, Russia retired to a policy of watching and warding off British designs upon the Sultan; while Germany, who had never known what share, if any, Salisbury proposed to give her at the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, felt humiliated. The effect of the personal meeting between Salisbury and the Kaiser at Cowes was, in the highest degree, unfortunate. Britain, which already faced the hostility of Russia, and, secondly, of France, had now concluded no understanding with Germany. Much uneasiness was felt in the country.

It was understood even in non-expert circles that the world had suddenly become a set of problems vast in size, in complexity and in power. Russia was undoubtedly Britain's greatest problem. She, with France and Great Britain, had her eyes on Turkey, on Egypt and on China. And Russia, it was clear, was embarking with France upon a policy of financial penetration of China with a view to securing a dominant position in Peking. On October 25, 1895, The Times startled the world with the revelation that Russia and China had come to a secret agreement by which the former Power was given a right of anchorage at Port Arthur and the right to carry the trans-Siberian railway across Chinese territory, together with certain commercial

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advantages. "Manchuria," observed a leading article of the 25th, "would practically become a Russian province. . . . It cannot be necessary to dwell upon the reasons which this country would have for protesting against a seizure of the Sick Man's inheritance, which would profoundly alter all the conditions of our 'Eastern Trade.'" The existence of such a treaty was denied by the Russian Government; even the Russian Ambassador in London was given to believe that the statement was false.1 It now seems probable that the report was inexact. Certainly the correspondent who sent the news proved, when pressed by Wallace, to be uncertain about the details. The correspondent in question was T. H. Whitehead, a bank manager in Hongkong, who was corresponding with The Times in circumstances of the utmost secrecy. The regular correspondent, T. Cowen, roundly affirmed that there was no such treaty. The telegram "was not from me, and I do not believe it, as I know how it got abroad in Hong-kong. It was probably sent you directly or indirectly by the manager of the Chartered Bank, Mr. T. Whitehead, who takes a great personal interest in Chinese loan puzzles."2

The incident, coupled with British interest in southern China, led The Times to make an important addition to its staff. It was necessary to possess exact knowledge of the conditions prevailing The services of a new man were required. A possible in Siam. recruit, the author of a new book on China, might be worth trying. He was young, though not inexperienced; but his name was unknown in London, if tolerably familiar in remote parts of the world. Nobody, therefore, was more surprised than George Ernest Morrison, M.D., Ch.B., to receive an invitation to call upon the Manager of The Times. At the age of twenty Morrison had led a pioneer expedition to New Guinea, whence he had returned, with the head of a spear thrown by a native still in his body. It remained under Morrison's skin until it was extracted by Prof. Chevne when the explorer was studying medicine in Edinburgh. In the interval he had walked across Australia from Normanton back to Geelong, where he was born, a distance of 2,043 miles, which he covered in 123 days; he had taken a degree in surgery at Geelong. A longing to see the world drove him to sign on as an able seaman and he chose the South Seas in order to study the Kanaska labour question. On returning he wrote articles on his findings for the Melbourne Age. Next he went as an emigrant to America and left the United States in order to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Staal to Lobanow, October 29, 1895. (A. Meyendorff, Correspondance diplomatique de M. de Staal, 1909, II, 283.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> T. Cowen to Bell, Hong-kong, October 29, 1895. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

serve as assistant purser in a ship engaged in the West Indian fruit trade. He walked across Jamaica before returning to New York, whence he shipped to Spain to take service as assistant medical officer at the Rio Tinto copper mines. After a later period of service as Court Physician to the Shereef of Wazan in Morocco he passed through a post-graduate course under Charcot at the Salpêtrière in Paris. His qualifications amply justified the governors of the Ballarat hospital in offering him the post of resident surgeon. Morrison performed these duties for two years before the routine became irksome. His eagerness for a change led him to take ship to Hong-kong. At thirty-three years of age. Morrison was strikingly handsome, tall and well built—a magnificent specimen of Australian manhood. Morrison, moreover, was scientific in his power of observation, scrupulous in his thinking, and equipped with a remarkable memory. He was expert with the gun and the canoe, uniquely self-reliant and invariably unaccompanied on his explorations. His mind was candid, his writing fluent and balanced. It was late in October of 1895 that Morrison thought of journalism. He had been in London since February 15 hoping to get an engagement as correspondent, and in the meantime had published An Australian in China. He had finished a 3,000-mile trip through China at a cost of £18 and was in London publishing his book (London, Horace Cox, 1895). He had applied in vain to the Scotsman and the Pall Mall Gazette. (Sir) Henry Norman, of the Daily Chronicle, advised him to apply to Bell, but Morrison, abashed at the idea. did not venture to write. It was upon the introduction of Sir William Gowers, Buckle's physician, that Bell asked Morrison to call at The Times office. He was then living in humble lodgings in the neighbourhood of King's Cross and made his first appearance in P.H.S. dressed in a manner more appropriate to King's Cross than to the City. Bell asked Morrison if he knew who was the author of the Far Eastern Question articles then appearing in The Times and, receiving a negative answer, said that if he would come to dinner he would meet the author, and added: "Never mind your dress clothes, and in the meantime think over the matter of going to Peking for The Times." At dinner he met Buckle, Miss Flora Shaw and Chirol, the author of the Far Eastern articles. Subsequently at Bell's he met Monypenny and at The Times Arthur Walter and Wallace, who outlined what he was to do in Siam before going on to Peking.

As Bell judged, Morrison looked as if he might prove a colleague of the best type. At least he deserved immediate trial as a Far Eastern Special Correspondent for *The Times*.



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#### MORRISON IN SIAM

But he was not to admit that he was an agent of the paper. Bell's instructions were that Morrison was to go "as a private individual, and so long as possible to maintain this character and appear to have no connexion with *The Times*." 1

Morrison accepted the commission. The political point of the journey was to note and describe the conditions which underlay the existing friction between France and Britain in certain regions. It was understood that Morrison would make his way through Burma across the Chinese frontier into the interior, and then return to Siam. This plan was duly carried out, although the obtaining of a passport into China had its difficulties, as Morrison reported:

If a Chinaman were able to read English he would be struck with the very free translation of the English application for my passport. My English reads like this: "Dr. Morrison wishes to travel, &c., I therefore beg of you to kindly grant him the necessary passport." This I have induced the translator to convert into

"The Prince Doctor a learned man friend of his Excellency the Viceroy of Yunnan intends to travel into China. I therefore require that in accordance with treaty he shall be given the necessary passport that he may travel in safety under the protection of His Majesty the Emperor, &c."

It has two seals and every line is underlined in red. The envelope is the largest in the station and I have stamped it on the outside with a magnificent official-looking seal, but as I had no seal I have used instead what does equally well, the lid of a Van Houten's cocoa tin. If that passport does not ensure me respect then I don't know the Chinese.<sup>2</sup>

At a time when the French were very active in the interior of Siam, Morrison's reporting was of the highest importance.<sup>3</sup> His first messages coincided with those from South Africa regarding the Jameson Raid.<sup>4</sup>

The friction between England and France in Siam and Yunnan was removed by the settlement of January, 1896, which rectified the boundaries of Burma and Indo-China and divided the commercial privileges in the Chinese provinces of Yunnan and Szechwan. Although Sir Thomas Sanderson wrote to Wallace

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bell to Morrison, November 20, 1895. (M.B. 13/80.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Morrison, Keng Tung, June 12, 1896, to Bell. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

Morrison's articles were known to have had important reactions upon Paris. That he was in some way of direct assistance to the British Government is indicated by the following: "We are greatly indebted to Mr. Morrison for the information which he has forwarded. Have you any idea how I should address to him my acknowledgment? I suppose he means to come out of the interior of China in the course of time." T. Sanderson to Moberly Bell, Foreign Office, November 14, 1896. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

<sup>4</sup> See next Chapter "The Jameson Raid and the Inquiry."

to defend the agreement,1 The Times was not altogether pleased with it. When the Anglo-Chinese Treaty of June 5, 1897, respecting these regions was revised eighteen months later, Chirol regretted that Salisbury had not been firmer and secured better terms.<sup>2</sup> He, like Curzon, the Under Secretary (no understanding between them seems to have existed),3 was acutely dissatisfied with Salisbury's lack of enterprise in South China. It was believed in Printing House Square that there was more than a grain of truth in Curzon's contentions. The attitude of The Times continued to be firmer than that of Salisbury, who had now told the German Ambassador that "it would be not at all unwelcome to him if Russia became more deeply engaged in China. . . . England would only raise objections if Russia insisted on exclusive rights for her ships at Port Arthur."4 Chirol's personal view was expressed in a letter to Bell saving that "Things in the Far East look very threatening again, but nobody in England, and Lord S. least of all, seems to care a rap."5

With Chirol at last back in P.H.S., The Times felt constrained to admit (April 11, 1896) that the real victor of the Chinese-Japanese war was Russia. The paper continued to express suspicion of the activities of both Russia and France, and to lament the lack of initiative of the British Foreign Office. In May, 1896, hearing of Chinese concessions to Russia, the paper declared that such advantages would be detrimental to British interests.

The grant of the Chifu concession in disregard of the desires of the British community and without consulting the British Government is at once a proof of the superior efficacy of Russian methods of dealing with China. . . . We have given the Chinese prodigious quantities of the best advice for a couple of generations. . . . Other Powers . . . tell China what they want, and in one form or another they show her that they mean to get it. The result is that they do get what they want. . . China knows they are in earnest, and she yields accordingly. Until we instil a similar conviction into the Mandarins we shall always come off second best where France and Russia are our rivals. (May 13, 1896.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Sanderson to Wallace, Foreign Office, January 16, 1896. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Chirol to Morrison, June 10, 1897. (F. 3/872.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> But they were neighbours in the same block of flats and saw much of each other. (Gwynn, Cecil Spring-Rice I, 259.)

<sup>4</sup> Hatzfeldt to the German Foreign Office, October 25, 1895. (G.P., X, 35.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Chirol to Bell, Berlin, March 7, 1896. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

# MORRISON'S FIRST MISSION FOR THE TIMES

But in spite of its strong and inevitable suspicions concerning Russian designs in the Far East, *The Times* consistently sought to reduce the possibility of an Anglo-Russian conflict, whether in Asia or Europe. Hence, if Korea gave Russia virtual control of the province, the agreement had the advantage of making for peace and "Our first and greatest interest in the Far East is peace." (September 22, 1896.) Even rumours of the Cassini Convention (of March, 1897), establishing a Russo-Chinese defensive alliance and giving Russia the right to carry the Trans-Siberian railway through Manchuria, might, it was thought, be reconciled with the "Open Door" policy. (December 26, 1896.)

In the following year, however, a special article on the treaty by Demetrius Boulger declared that it made a reconsideration of the Far Eastern situation and a readiness to take "decisive action" incumbent on the British Government. (January 5, 1897.) That The Times was fully aware of the necessity to study the situation became obvious to the world when, in February, 1897, the paper decided to appoint a new resident correspondent in Peking in succession to A. R. Colquhoun, who had resigned some time earlier. Morrison was instructed to proceed from Bangkok to Peking. He at once surprised the outgoing correspondent, himself a man of energy, with the seriousness with which he contemplated his new task. There are slight indications that The Times was about to consider abandoning the traditional British policy of the "Open Door" coupled with the maintenance of the integrity of the Chinese Empire.

As Li Hung Chang passed under Russian influence, his stock progressively dropped with *The Times*. Chirol, we have seen, never thought him an angel of light; the opinion of Morrison, was not different. "Li Hung Chang... had the impudence to ask me if a money present could induce me to write to *The Times* advocating a doubling of the Import dues without compensation. The crafty old man is failing, he now looks his full age of 76 and it cannot be long before he must be laid aside from physical infirmity."

In the winter of 1896-1897 Chirol made a second tour of the Far East and returned with a very pessimistic opinion as to the state of Chinese finance and the possibility of regeneration. "The prospect of any real reform or radical change in the system of incompetence and corruption which has brought the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Morrison to Bell, Peking, April 8, 1897. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

Chinese Empire to the verge of ruin seems more remote than ever."1 At the end of 1897 a scramble for naval bases was precipitated by the Germans, who seized Kiao-Chau in December as a reprisal for the murder by robbers of two German mission-The consequent German aggression and its implications for British policy were reported with regularity by Morrison. The opinion of The Times of this action and its circumstances was decidedly hostile: "The Emperor wants to increase his fleet, and his subjects do not want to find the money. If some commotion and excitement could be got up about Kiao-Chau. and if somebody would only oblige with a little bluster against Germany, some passing heat of patriotism might be evolved which would induce the Reichstag to open its purse." (November 23, 1897.) A few weeks later Chirol advocated in a leading article the acquisition by Great Britain of some islands in South China at the mouth of the Yangtze. (December 10, 1897.) A more significant reply to the German seizure of Chinese territory was the suggestion of a British loan to China advocated by The Times on January 10, 1898. "We can provide the money at the shortest possible notice. All that the Government have to do is to satisfy themselves that it is a good political investment and that it will be fairly well secured. On these conditions all parties are ready to welcome this method of protecting British interests in the Far East." Next day Wallace wrote to Chirol: "Our advice to the Government to arrange the new loan for China has been wonderfully well received in all quarters and the negotiations are proceeding, but the Foreign Office is unusually reticent on the subject."2

The disputes over the Chinese treaty ports and loans, inevitably led to a general reconsideration of Britain's relations with China. Balfour restated the position that had long been taken up by The Times, i.e., that her interests in China were commercial and not territorial. Hicks Beach spoke in defence of the "Open Door" policy. The Times of January 19 and 31, 1898, backed up the statements of both statesmen. Britain certainly did not like the occupation of Port Arthur by Russia and the demand that the two British cruisers in the port should depart. Britain, therefore, could hardly raise difficulties for Germany at Kiao-Chau. The situation was not regarded by average British opinion as at all happy, and the plan of restoring British prestige by occupying Wei-hai-wei was determined upon. It was now impossible either to entertain friendly feelings towards Russia or to feel

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The Far Eastern Question IV" (in The Times, February 3, 1897).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Wallace to Chirol, January 11, 1898. (F. 4/50.)

#### MORRISON APPOINTED TO PEKING

comfortable without them. On May 4, 1898, Salisbury deprecated the talk of "isolation." Ten days later Chamberlain, speaking at Birmingham, said that the country had neither allies nor friends, and insisted that if the existing policy of "isolation" were continued, the fate of the Chinese Empire would be decided without reference to Britain. The possibility of an arrangement with Russia had faded. Anyhow, Chamberlain said in a famous speech, "Who sups with the devil must have a very long spoon."

Next, the Chinese loan negotiations broke down owing largely to the hostility of Russia, who forced China to refuse certain concessions. Morrison in Peking showed unusual ability in exposing the intrigues, and secret interplay of forces, during this period, and it was towards the end of March that the paper's unwelcome publication of his dispatches¹ led Curzon to make his unfortunate observation in the House of Commons about the correspondent's "intelligent anticipation of facts even before they occur." The dissatisfaction of The Times with the Foreign Office, especially with the aged Salisbury's retention of the Prime Ministership and the position of Foreign Secretary, reached its highest pitch at this time. The British loan, which Morrison predicted would have been "the greatest diplomatic success gained by any power here for 20 years past," had failed, and, in the circumstances of its failure, Britain was now obliged, said the paper, to take other steps:

To secure our rights in an effectual fashion from the pressure which threatens them both from the north and from the south, it is absolutely necessary that we should be able to defend . . . the "great belly of China," and to do this with effect Britain must be able to employ the arguments at Peking which others have found so convincing. The Mandarins are alive to the pressure of fear alone and we must be able to frighten them as others if we expect to find them complaisant. For this reason, as well as on the technical grounds stated by Lord Charles, some point from which we can make our influence felt at Peking is essential to us. With such a point in our occupation, and with what is yet more indispensable "a definite policy with an aim in it" we may yet hope to maintain that position in the Far East to which our responsibilities and our interests entitle us. (March 29, 1898.)

Notwithstanding, The Times refrained from whole-hearted approval of the acquisition of Wei-hai-wei; the place was too far

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> That these revelations assisted Russia to frustrate the British plan was denied by Chirol in a short article: "The Times and Negotiations at Peking." (April 5, 1898.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Morrison to Bell, Peking, January 18, 1898. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

# MIDDLE EAST AND FAR EAST TO 1899

to the north of China and "it will be of service just in so far as it enables us to exercise moral pressure upon Peking for the purpose of pressing our interests further south." Great Britain was not intrinsically interested, either commercially or strategically, in North China. At this time actual Russian progress in the north, notwithstanding even the excitement over Port Arthur, caused in P.H.S. less anxiety than the mere rumour that France would secure a station in the South.

With the several acquisitions made by the Powers at the beginning of 1898 the Far Eastern Question entered upon a new phase. Now, in the view of P.H.S., British policy which the world declared to have suffered a great defeat, should be guided by considerations adduced in an article on "The Naval Squadrons in the Far East" written by the Naval Correspondent of The Times (March 28, 1898). Japan, said the writer, had numerically the largest fleet in those waters, and, as the writer claimed, of a quality not inferior to the best. "The Japanese fleet is therefore a factor of the highest importance. On the other hand, the Chinese fleet is not worth taking into account." But was China so feeble that it would break up under a combination of an internal disintegration and external pressure? Or would Russia alone, or in a combination of European Powers, exert a determining effect? British interests in China were, Mr. Balfour had recently stated with the approval of The Times "not territorial, but commercial, or, as it might be more correct to say, they are territorial in so far as territorial influence is necessary for upholding our commercial rights." The paper was in no mood to look on unmoved while authorities at Peking were brought to the condition of "subservient puppets of a rival state." In order to protect trade agreements it was necessary to protect those who had signed them and hence Britain needed to be in a position "to watch over and, if need be, to vindicate our rights at the capital." The Times viewed with approval such evidence as there was that "Lord Salisbury's Government is now working harmoniously with the rising maritime Power of the Far East." For some time, the paper said, the impression had prevailed that Ministries had been disposed "to hold Japan at arms' length." Whatever the answer to questions regarding the balance of power in the Far East, we had to place limits upon our responsibilities, but to show no lack of firmness within those limits.

Let us define the area from which we mean at all risks to exclude the political influence of other European Powers, and tell them and

# CHIROL CRITICAL OF THE "OPEN DOOR"

the nation that any intrusion within that area means war waged with all the forces of the Empire. (April 4, 1898.)

This is hardly the old "Open Door" policy. Chirol was in control, in Wallace's absence, when the following piece of plain speaking appeared:

The Russo-Chinese Bank has financed the first section of that line which is to penetrate into the heart of the British sphere, and the so-called Belgian syndicate, which is merely a group of French financiers operating in Russian interests, has agreed to finance the next section. The Russian opposition to the investment of British capital in railways in North China and the exultation of M. Hanotaux's organ over the Belgian concession as the last political triumph he achieved for France show, if proof be required, how the shrewdest of Continental statesmen regard these enterprises in the Yang-tsze region. To them railways are the instruments, not of commerce, but of conquest. The policy of the "Open Door" all over China is undeniably the one most consonant with our traditions and with our interests, but if we can neither persuade nor compel the other Powers to accept it, it becomes merely a counsel of perfection beyond the range of practical politics. Instead of clinging to its shadow [i.e., that of the policy of the "Open Door"] in those regions where our half-hearted efforts to secure it temporarily can only cause futile irritation, would it not be wiser to apply our whole energies to safeguarding it permanently in those regions where we have the will and the power to enforce it? (July 25, 1898.)

As to our attitude to the Chinese policy of other Great Powers, it still seemed highly undesirable, in Wallace's view, to press antagonism to Russia to unnecessary lengths. In the course of a letter, he wrote that:

In my opinion the interests of peace can best be served by our coming to an amicable arrangement with Russia regarding the questions in which our interests seem to conflict. More than twenty years ago I declared publicly my conviction that a cordial rapprochement between the two countries would be advantageous to both and in that opinion I have never since wavered. Since that time there has been a little progress in the desired direction, though not nearly so much as I should like.<sup>1</sup>

But even during Wallace's term as foreign specialist, the obvious facts of the Far Eastern situation forbade *The Times* to take up a position very far ahead of public opinion as a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wallace to Steed, December 19, 1898. (F. 4/229.) For Steed, then correspondent at Rome, see *infra*, p. 280.

crusader for Anglo-Russian rapprochement. And at the end of the century the nature of the Far Eastern crisis forced Wallace reluctantly to take the lead against Russia. Chirol's personal convictions about the Far East, his personal concern for the defences of India, and his personal connexion with Curzon all convinced him of the correctness of a consistent anti-Russian policy. This was farther than Wallace desired to go. But the pressure of Russia was too much for him as it was for Chirol who moved steadily towards the idea of abandoning altogether the "Open Door." He favoured instead the policy of "spheres of influence." This was bound to intensify British hostility towards Russia. For, although nominally the policy might mean only the securing of spheres of commercial influence, yet political influence was bound to develop and Peking would surely fall into the Russian sphere. Inevitably, therefore, the British would be forced to undermine Imperial authority at the expense of provincial rulers. The result must be that the disintegration of China would be hastened. The prospect was one that Chirol was not unprepared to face.

The office also had shown an inclination towards a more vigorous policy. Lord Charles Beresford returned from the Far East with a strong conviction of the importance of its problems and some very definite views—among them, that there should be a Quadruple Alliance between Great Britain, the U.S.A., Japan and Germany to maintain the "Open Door" against France and Russia. The Admiral visited Printing House Square and saw Bell on the matter. On January 9, 1899, a leading article, mentioning Beresford by name, advocated such an alliance. Chirol, however, had no faith in such a policy; the untrustworthiness of Germany alone decided against it. Hence he wrote in June to Morrison: "You will no doubt have noticed that the view we have adopted with regard to the impracticability of Lord C.B.'s Quadruple Alliance and to the policy of Spheres generally reflects in no small measure the opinions you expressed. I am afraid the Government are floundering as badly as or worse than ever."1

Such sentiments amount to a good deal more than advocacy of commercial spheres, and the words "make the Yang-tze (and Canton) our own," which Chirol had addressed to Morrison in the spring were, in fact, more optimistic than they sounded. They read, indeed, very much like a proposal to divide up the Chinese Empire. By the summer, such a scheme did not look

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Morrison, June 9, 1899. (F. 4/377.)

# THE "OPINIONS" MORRISON HAD EXPRESSED

like being carried through without a good deal of delay. On June 9, 1899, Chirol wrote to Morrison deploring the weakness of policy exhibited in a British Blue Book on the Far East, but "in view of the Transvaal crisis, we felt bound to let H.M.G. down over it pretty easily, and, until we have settled up with the Boers, I fear we shall have to continue to 'go easy' with regard to China."

It was, indeed, the fact that the Jameson Raid on December 29, 1895, and the subsequent inquiry had become an African question—and more. The "settling up with the Boers" had created for all the Continental Powers, a rallying-point. The inquiry had placed *The Times*, and two prominent members of the staff at P.H.S., in a position of the acutest anxiety.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter VII, "Imperialism: The Transvaal," pp. 158 ff.

# IX

# THE JAMESON RAID AND THE INQUIRY

THE TIMES of Monday December 30, 1895, contained Flora Shaw's usual weekly article. It gave a résumé of the grievances of the National Union. Her pen was heavy with indignation against the Boer Government. A leading article, more moderate in tone, still hoped for "some reasonable concessions" from Kruger and that no desperate remedies would be taken by the Uitlanders: "It would be, we feel, a calamity to civilization in South Africa if the controversy had to be decided by an appeal to force." Next day a message from Johannesburg, dated December 29, said that the political excitement was now abating. Bryden's second article on "The Transvaal Boer" by emphasizing the strength and vigour of the Boer character excused the more brutal qualities upon which stress was usually laid by the Uitlanders. This was all. London, therefore, was without information of Jameson's move. Bell, among the other one or two informed people, was most anxious. The telegram Miss Shaw had received on December 11 had been daily, if not hourly, in his mind ever since. To him one more postponement would be fatal to the whole enterprise. The entry in Mrs. Bell's diary for December 31 reads: "C. went down to office after dinner very depressed."

When Bell arrived at P.H.S., he at last found awaiting him the message he had been led to expect. It was from Rutherfoord Harris addressed to Flora Shaw at her private address and was thus introduced:

The following letter, signed by leading inhabitants of Johannesburg, was sent on Saturday to Dr. Jameson at Mafeking:

Johannesburg, December 28, 1895.

To Dr. Jameson, &c.

What followed was the first and exclusive publication or mention of the "letter" extracted by Jameson from the Johannesburg leaders in November. The report proceeded:

<sup>1</sup> For the circumstances in which the "letter" was written, see supra, p. 173.

# THE EASTERN TELEGRAPH COMPANY, LIMITED.

Good Capetown 11 17a

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Felamones Low

You can publish

letter

Rhodes's telegram to Flora Shaw authorising publication in The Times of the "Women and Children" Letter December 31, 1895

# PUBLICATION OF JAMESON'S "LETTER"

In consequence of this appeal, Dr. Jameson yesterday crossed the Transvaal frontier near Mafeking with 700 men, and it is known that he passed Malmani at 5 o'clock this morning. No further direct news has been received from the Transvaal.

Bell's mind was instantly relieved as Mrs. Bell's diary records: "[C.] came back at four quite cheerful. News that Jameson had crossed border into Transvaal. The situation in S. Africa very ticklish..."

Thus on the morning of Wednesday, New Year's Day, readers of The Times found in their newspaper the sensational message, as from "Our Correspondent" in Cape Town, under the date December 30. The leading article took a judicial view of Jameson's act; advised that judgment should be suspended until fuller information was to hand; held that the "letter" sent to Jameson hardly seemed to constitute sufficient warrant for his proceedings. there being no evidence yet that the evils apprehended by its authors were imminent; urged that if statements in the "letter" were proved, Jameson must have acted well, if not correctly: concluded that if Chamberlain were immediately to disown Jameson he might find himself blamed for intervening on an insufficient basis of fact. For the benefit of the outside world, The Times gave warning that "We will not endure foreign intervention in any shape in the Transvaal, nor will we suffer that country to fall into anarchy." On the same day Bryden was allowed to complete his series of articles with a contrast between the simple life of the Boers and the state of society in Johannesburg. There a few men grew enormously rich, while others struggled for a living, and instead of honest toil one found hard drinking, chicanery, vice and crime. The opposite scale was weighed down by the first of a series of articles on "The Transvaal Uitlander." The writer was Flora Shaw. She gave the history of Boer despotism, strengthened, as it was by Dutchmen imported direct from Holland and to whom the ordinary Boer farmers were content to leave the business of politics. Miss Shaw also wrote an account of the Transvaal crisis, so far as it was known. The "letter" was accepted on its face value, but it was thought unlikely that any fighting would take place unless conciliation proved to be out of the question. The situation, from what could be judged in London, was not yet secure. Mrs. Bell describes "C." as "very tired and still depressed. News from Cape anxious." But confirmation that Jameson had in fact crossed revived Bell's spirits and he spent New Year's day cheerfully.

Chamberlain's official statement from the Colonial Office, made public next day, January 2, said that the High Commis-

sioner had been instructed to repudiate Jameson's act and to emphasize the fact that Rhodes had affirmed Jameson's move to have been made against his authority. Miss Shaw, commenting on the Colonial Office communiqué, suspended judgment on Jameson. She admitted the high improbability that Rhodes or the Chartered Company had sanctioned his move. The Times, in a leading article, called for more evidence before condemning Jameson, but did not forbear to endorse protests against the travesty of government in the Transvaal. The hope was expressed that by disowning the Raid and saving the Boer Government. Chamberlain had taken moral responsibility for the reform of the Boer administration. As long as there was still a faint hope that Jameson might succeed in getting through to Johannesburg, The Times withheld condemnation. The news of his surrender at Doornkop, a bitter blow to the activist party, was received by the Colonial Office at 5 p.m. on Thursday, January 2. At 7.30 on that day Bell returned home; Mrs. Bell describes him as "very done and very anxious." He had "just heard that Jameson had been surrounded and had surrendered." After dinner Bell returned to P.H.S. Flora Shaw, reporting the surrender in Friday's paper, suggested that it might have been a voluntary one to avoid bloodshed. The feelings of Bell are not recorded in any surviving correspondence but that they were gloomy in the extreme cannot be doubted.

Suddenly the situation underwent a dramatic change, telegram<sup>1</sup> from the German Emperor to Kruger congratulated him and his people for "repelling with their own forces the armed bands which had broken into their country and maintaining the independence of their country against foreign aggression." It had the instant effect of placing the activists in a sympathetic light. The telegram was taken to mean that Germany would readily have intervened on behalf of Kruger if he had asked for the help of "friendly Powers." All Britain was roused by the threat of any such interference by a Foreign Power. Publication of the telegram took place on January 4, 1896. The storm turned from Jameson and centred upon Germany. In one day Jameson was transformed almost into a hero, whose single fault was a certain over-eagerness to help his fellow-countrymen. The Times was carried so far by indignation against the outrageous interference of the Kaiser in the affairs of the British Empire that it was able to overlook the criminality of Jameson's act. The paper hoped that the Boers would be merciful to the Doctor. "the second most prominent man of British blood

<sup>1</sup> For the text and the circumstances of the dispatch of the telegram, see next Chapter, "Hostile Europe," p. 258. The German reaction is dealt with in detail at pp. 260 ff.

# THE KAISER'S TELEGRAM TO KRUGER

in South Africa and the best beloved," whose death at their hands would evoke a storm of passionate sympathy both in South Africa and at home. Miss Shaw's concluding article on "The Transvaal Uitlander" turned in a moderate direction and even expressed the hope that the progressive party among the Boers would take charge of the country and cooperate with the rest of South Africa.

A fuller story of Jameson's surrender and the calamities following it was chronicled the next week. On Chamberlain's instructions, the High Commissioner had immediately gone to Pretoria. Rhodes remained at the Cape, retaining his office of Prime Minister until it was convenient for his resignation to be accepted. The reformers in Johannesburg had been caught with no immediate plan of action. As Leonard was in Cape Town, Phillips was appointed head of the hastily appointed "Reform Committee." As before, they played for safety. They announced their adhesion to the last Manifesto of the National Union, their intention to preserve order in Johannesburg and their loyalty to the Boer Government. The Republic's vierkleur was hoisted over their headquarters. They enrolled volunteers and dug trenches. Kruger, on the other hand, had merely been waiting for "the tortoise to put out its head." Jameson's force was successfully brought to battle before it reached Johannesburg. The hungry exhausted men, ambushed, outnumbered and deprived of reinforcements, had to surrender after a gallant resistance. They were well treated by the Boers, taken as prisoners to Pretoria, and then handed over to the British to be shipped home for trial. But the Reform Committee received very different treatment at the hands of Kruger. Before he had rounded up Jameson's force, he persuaded the Committee that a peaceful settlement might be arrived at provided there was no hostile action in the town against the Boer Government. Once all danger of armed interference was over, negotiations with the British High Commissioner were made to hang on the disarmament of Johannesburg. Robinson, an old and ailing man, was no match for Kruger. Fearing for the lives of Jameson and his fellows, he persuaded the Reform Committee to accept Kruger's ultimatum. They handed over their arms and disbanded their troops. The Boer President then acted. Sixty-four members of the Reform Committee were arrested and taken to Pretoria to be tried for treason. On April 28, 1896, Phillips, Frank Rhodes, Farrar and Hammond were condemned

<sup>1</sup> Younghusband wrote privately to Bell from Pretoria on January 11, 1896: "They were not really game for the business and if he [Jameson] had not crossed the border would never have taken up arms. The great mistake made was trying to run races with cart horses."

to death; the rest were sentenced to two years' imprisonment and a fine.1

After the publication of the "letter," The Times sought to maintain an attitude of impartiality. While not backing Jameson's Raid, the paper condemned Chamberlain's "censure of an absent man who undeniably has rendered great and distinguished service to his country." On January 7, Rhodes's resignation from the Premiership was announced, while the Editor found it more convenient to devote his leading article to the familiar topic of German interference rather than to the consequences of the Raid. But The Times maintained its grip of the wider issues of the future of South Africa; supported Rhodes's belief that it was destined to be developed by white men; insisted that this was an enterprise to be controlled by the British race and by no other. The paper also preserved its estimate of Rhodes's greatness despite a temporary fall. It warned readers that Boer animosity to Rhodes had become for them a matter of policy on account of his responsibility for the extension of British power in South Africa. The remedy for what had happened was an increase not of Boer, but of Imperial, influence and that for the benefit not of the Boer but of the "British race":

The assailants of the Chartered Company are too ready to forget what Mr. Rhodes and his colleagues have accomplished. They have secured for the British race an Empire in South Africa of immense extent and practically inexhaustible resources. . . . If the Chartered Company has been guilty of wrong, it must pay the penalty. If it has been unable to restrain its subordinates, it must submit to a larger measure of Imperial control. But certainly no case has yet been made out for the penal confiscation of its property and rights that is clamoured for in certain quarters. (January 10, 1896.)

The letters to the Editor reflected the sympathy of the British public for Jameson, "that gallant and unfortunate gentleman," as he was described by one correspondent, Mrs. R. T. Chamberlain, a sister-in-law of the Colonial Secretary. Jameson's Ride, a set of verses written by the Poet Laureate, Alfred Austin. and published in The Times on January 11, eulogised the Doctor as a dare-devil hero risking his life to rescue British mothers and children.2

On February 4, 1896, Rhodes arrived in England. On the following day, Mrs. Bell notes, "Flora saw Mr. Rhodes and

<sup>2</sup> Austin received £25 from The Times for these verses. If their poetic value was low, they suited the mood of the moment. Bell received many applications asking per-

mission to recite them and to set them to music.

<sup>1</sup> These sentences of imprisonment were all eventually commuted, in deference to public opinion throughout South Africa. Phillips, Rhodes, Farrar and Hammond were released on payment of fines of £25,000 each. Cecil Rhodes paid £50,000 towards these fines.

reports him quite serene and equal to holding his own absolutely, but he will be conciliatory to Chamberlain." On February 8 Bell and Chirol (who had returned from Berlin early that morning) lunched with Rhodes, who told them he was returning at once to Rhodesia, which plan he carried out two days later. Jameson and twelve other leaders of the Raid were brought to trial in London for offences against the Foreign Enlistment Act. Jameson dined with the Bells on March 14.

A Select Committee of the Cape of Good Hope House of Assembly sat from June 2 to July 13, 1896, to inquire into the circumstances of the Jameson Raid. The Committee were reluctantly forced to the conclusion that the part taken by Rhodes in the organization which led to Jameson's Raid was not consistent with his duty as Prime Minister of the Colony.¹ All through the year 1896 politicians and journalists disputed the question of responsibility for the Jameson Raid. The trial of Jameson in London was so limited in scope that it produced little fresh evidence. Obviously a great deal more was left to be explained, as for example, the extent of Rhodes's guilt and whether he should be left without further punishment.

Meanwhile, persistent rumours circulated in London that Chamberlain and *The Times* were parties to the conspiracy. That *The Times* was the only paper to secure the "letter" for publication had already provoked comment. Edmund Powell, the paper's correspondent in Cape Town, had written to the Manager on January 28, 1896:

I beg that I may have your permission to say where I find it necessary, that I did not despatch the message with the Johannesburg letter to Jameson published in *The Times* of January 1 and purporting to come from me.

I knew that Jameson would not move without such a letter but first learned its terms from the papers picked up after the battle.

The matter may appear trivial to you; but as I spoke and acted as if ignorant of the terms of the letter (as I actually was) I am made to appear guilty of duplicity in quarters damaging to me.

The complaints against the paper in South Africa were now transferred to London. The *Daily Chronicle* of February 6 had already sarcastically remarked that *The Times* had "established its claim to speak with something like supernatural authority on

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This report (known as the Cape Blue Book) was published by the Stationery Office in March, 1897. The Cape Blue Book includes the greater portion of the Transvaal Green Book.

all that concerns the Chartered Company." The Director of Public Prosecutions asked Bell on March 26, 1896, if he would authorize The Times Correspondent at Cape Town to disclose particulars of the "letter" for the purpose of the forthcoming prosecution of Jameson. Bell replied briefly by sending him "the original telegram, dated Cape Town, December 31, 1895, sent by Dr. Harris to Miss Shaw, which, together with the translation, also annexed, was handed to us by that lady on receipt of a second telegram, also enclosed, dated 31, and published by us in The Times of next day. This is all the information we have on the subject." The Public Prosecutor inquired again if the Cape Town Correspondent had received any instructions, to which Bell replied that Powell needed no instruction from him as he had absolutely no information to furnish, and was at liberty to disclaim the telegram. Public controversy was stimulated by the publication on May 1, 1896, of a series of telegrams which had passed in December, 1895, between Cape Town, Johannesburg and Pitsani. The originals had been put in as evidence by the Boer Government that week at the Pretoria trial of the Reform Committee and a lucky find of the code key in the baggage of the captured raiders had enabled the Boers to decipher them.1 Their publication left no further doubt of Rhodes's knowledge of events leading up to the Raid. A great outcry was raised by all and sundry. The demand for a full inquiry was pressed home, names were freely mentioned; The Times was not ignored.

Conspicuous among critics of *The Times* was the *Saturday Review*, then under the editorship of Frank Harris.<sup>2</sup> On May 30 the *Review* insisted that:

The position taken up by *The Times* in regard to the Jameson Raid has caused intenser ill-feeling throughout South Africa than the shortcomings of British officials. After all, the chief British official in South Africa, Sir Hercules Robinson, stood for law and right during the crisis; and when it was known that Mr. Chamberlain supported him, it was felt that the British Government in spite of the actions of some of its officials, had freed itself from the suspicion of complicity

<sup>1</sup> The code-book was captured in a dispatch box with the name "Capt. R. White" painted in large letters on the outside, and the "trommel van Bobbie White" figured prominently in the Pretoria trial. Not unnaturally, therefore, Captain White incurred the blame for having taken important secret documents into the risks of battle. Thirty-four years later the truth was revealed in *The Times*. In December, 1930, the publication of Colonel Marshall Hole's history of the Jameson Raid stirred the late Col. J. B. Stracey-Clitherow, an old Raider then living in retirement in Yorkshire, to tell the whole story of the packing of the "trommel," of which he had been a "horrified" spectator. The code-book, with other odds and ends, was put into it, in spite of protests, by order of Sir John Willoughby, Military Commander of the Raiders, who explained that he would need it as soon as he reached Johannesburg. Capt. White, who had been sent to Mafeking, was entirely innocent of this use of his dispatch box, but, characteristically, never took the trouble to shift the responsibility. (See *The Times*, January 14, 1931.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For James Thomas, alias, Frank Harris, see appendix, p. 790.

#### THE TIMES SUSPECTED OF COMPLICITY

with crime. But *The Times* began by abetting and encouraging the Raid, and when that attitude had to be abandoned, it persisted in vilifying and traducing, not only the Government of the South African Republic, but the Boers themselves with a virulence of language and a disregard for truth, or even for probability, which astounded every one. Astonishment gave place to indignation and indignation to contempt. But since the publication of the cipher telegrams *The Times* seems to have resolved to mend its ways, and, therefore, we shall not insist further on its terrible mistakes. After all, a journal cannot blunder without paying for its errors in loss of authority.

On the same day, there was general comment in the Press on the "significant facts" that "on the day when the news of the Raid reached London everybody was puzzled by the fact that *The Times* published the manifesto of the Reform Union. Where did *The Times* get that manifesto? No other newspaper had received a hint of it." The *Star* did not accuse *The Times* of direct connexion with the organizers of the Raid, but was content "to let the facts tell their own tale, and to allow the public to draw their own conclusions." What the *Star* and other newspapers refrained from printing was on the lips of a large number of readers—and on those not only of the evening journal: *The Times* was "in it."

The Times made no attempt to answer the accusations of its contemporaries. It was content to make out a strong case for its support of Rhodes and the Company. As the opponents at home of British Imperialism clamoured for the abrogation of the Charter, The Times elected to range itself among the firmest upholders of the Chartered Company.<sup>2</sup>

But although the paper stood by Rhodes and the Chartered Company, it did not uphold his connexion with the fostering of a revolt in a friendly State. Inferentially *The Times* disclaimed any complicity on its own part. The leading article of May 1, 1896, when various letters and cables to be noticed later were first published, admitted that:

The correspondence establishes beyond the possibility of further doubt the fact that Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Beit, two Directors of the British South Africa Company, as well as Mr. Rutherfoord Harris, the secretary of the Company in South Africa, were privy to a move-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Star, May 30, 1896.

<sup>2 &</sup>quot;The contest of opinion over the Chartered Company is only bitter in London," wrote the Spectator of May 9, 1896. "The friends of that body, supported by The Times, the Daily Telegraph and some other less important journals, maintain that the Company, and especially Mr. Rhodes, are indispensable to South Africa, and that the most that ought to be conceded to its opponents is a Commission of Enquiry."

# THE JAMESON RAID AND THE INQUIRY

ment which was taking place in Johannesburg and that the leaders of the movement counted upon their help and countenance to ensure success.

"Sound" Imperialist policy of the kind supported by *The Times* was clearly expressed in the paper on May 2, 1896:

Our policy in South Africa through a series of years has rested and, as Mr. Chamberlain has recently pointed out, still rests on a twofold basis. We have proclaimed in words and shown by our acts that we are resolved to assert ourselves as the paramount Power throughout that region. We have demonstrated at the same time that we desire the two white races which inhabit it to live on terms of amity with each other. One man above all others has been conspicuous for the unwavering determination with which he has pursued these ends.

Rhodes had certainly shown himself the ablest and most devoted protagonist of this policy in South Africa. Therefore, the paper reasoned, this was no time to deal harshly with him. At the end of June, when Rhodes's resignation from the Board of Directors of the Chartered Company was announced, *The Times* prophesied that he was too big a personality to fall into oblivion. Stripped of his honours, he had made restitution for his blunders. There was still a future before him.

But the past was not yet purged. Jameson was sentenced on July 28, 1896. He was given fifteen months' imprisonment without hard labour. Sir John Willoughby, Major Robert White, Colonel Grey, Colonel Henry White and Major Coventry received shorter terms. The prisoners were heartily cheered by the crowd as they left the Law Courts. The Times considered these light sentences justifiable, for the prisoners undoubtedly erred from excess of zeal for what they thought the interests of the Empire in South Africa and of their fellow subjects in Johannesburg. The name of Rhodes was hardly mentioned during their trial. But in the same issue in which the close of the trial was reported, a letter was published over the signature of Bourchier F. Hawksley, his solicitor, saying that Rhodes was prepared to surrender at any time and to take his trial. There was more to come out.

On July 30, Chamberlain moved for the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Commons

To inquire into the administration of the British South Africa Company and to report what alterations are desirable in the government of the territories under the control of the Company; that the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Willoughby, Grey, Coventry and the Whites were compulsorily retired from the Army, but their commissions were subsequently restored. Jameson was released, because of ill-health, after serving about four months of his sentence.

# CHAMBERLAIN'S SELECT COMMITTEE, 1897

Committee have leave to hear counsel to such an extent as they shall see fit and have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

The resolution was amended by Sir William Harcourt to extend the scope of the inquiry into "the origin and circumstances of the incursion into the South African Republic by an armed force, and to report thereon." Chamberlain had already agreed to the amendment, and it was passed unanimously. The Committee could not sit until January, but it was felt that there was no need for haste since it was necessary to get the Matabeleland rebellion settled before the government of South Africa as a whole could be profitably reviewed. The Times expressed no enthusiasm for the setting up of a Select Committee but, when established, the paper hoped that it would conduct a fair-minded inquiry. The leading article on the subject advised against the inclusion of Labouchere among the members; he, it was argued, was too biased to give an impartial verdict. The objection was not listened to.

At the end of 1896 Rhodes went to Cape Town on his way to London to attend the Select Committee. By that time his wise and courageous handling of the Matabele rebellion had regained for him some of his popularity in South Africa. It contrasted so favourably with Kruger's continued persecution of the Uitlanders that Rhodes was enthusiastically entertained at Port Elizabeth and Cape Town. Many former Dutch friends welcomed him and he was moved to speak with confidence of a future public career in South Africa. The Times shared that confidence,3 although it rebuked him gently for his questionable taste in making such a statement before appearing in front of the Select Committee. But the paper warmly approved his plans for a united South Africa under the Cape. The Times knew no better way to assimilate the north to the south than Rhodes's policy of free tariffs, free railway communication, and equal laws for British and Dutch.

Rhodes arrived in England at the end of January, 1897, amid intense public excitement. Rumours of every kind were in circulation. The greatest names were involved. Revelations were expected and anticipated. When Rhodes saw Chamberlain at the Colonial Office, in the presence of Lord Selborne, he argued that the coming inquiry would do more harm than good; in any case, he would refuse to allow the production of the "cables"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Select Committee did not have time to deal with the first part of the resolution. Their Report was confined to the subject of Harcourt's amendment.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A view shared by Rhodes and also expressed to Chamberlain by Earl Grey in a letter written August 20, 1896. (J. L. Garvin, *Life of Joseph Chamberlain*, III, p. 115.) <sup>3</sup> The Times, January 4, 1897.

## THE JAMESON RAID AND THE INQUIRY

for which the Press, with the exception of *The Times*, was clamouring. Among those which most excited the public curiosity was a series of cables between Harris and Rhodes which Hawksley had sent to the Colonial Office, under the seal of confidence, in June, 1896. After Chamberlain had read them he had them returned to Hawksley. It was rumoured that these cables contained matter highly damaging to Chamberlain. The Colonial Secretary's reply to Rhodes was that it was impossible now to avoid the inquiry but that his policy had not changed on the subject of maintaining the Chartered Company as the agency to develop, the country. Rhodes left to consider his position.

As Flora Shaw noted in her weekly article on January 25, 1897. Rhodes kept aloof from everyone in London. She proceeded to say that the three separate inquiries already held into the Raid "leave very little to be elucidated in respect to facts; and it is doubtful whether Mr. Rhodes will be able to throw much fresh light upon them." If The Times did little to encourage speculation by its readers, the curiosity of the public at large could hardly have been more intense. The first public meeting of the Select Committee took place at Westminster Hall on February 16, 1897. in the large grand committee room. The members sat at a horseshoe table with W. L. Jackson (later Lord Allerton) as chairman, in the centre. Harcourt, Leader of the Opposition, sat on Jackson's left and Chamberlain on his right. The other members of the Committee were Hicks Beach (Chancellor of the Exchequer). Campbell-Bannerman, Richard Webster (Attorney-General, who had been one of the six counsel appearing for The Times before the Parnell Commission, and later Lord Alverstone), John Ellis, Hart Dyke, Sydney Buxton, J. L. Wharton, Edward Blake, C. A. Cripps (later Lord Parmoor), Labouchere, George Wyndham and J. C. Bigham (later Viscount Mersey).

The opening of the investigation, into what was regarded by public and politicians alike as the most sensational event of the time, attracted a distinguished audience. A crowd of eminent representatives of the House of Commons, of the Bar and of Society awaited the entry of Rhodes. He came into the room accompanied by Beit and Phillips. A few minutes later the Prince of Wales arrived, and was soon joined by Lord Selborne and the Duke of Abercorn. An order then came from the Committee, by the mouth of the Serjeant-at-Arms, for the withdrawal from the room of all persons except members of the Houses of Lords and Commons and representatives of the Press.

<sup>1</sup> J. L. Garvin, Life of Joseph Chamberlain, III, pp. 117-9.

### RHODES PROTECTS FLORA SHAW

A main object of the inquiry was to assess Rhodes's responsibility for the Raid. It was known that he had not been in England during the previous six months, but it was believed in many quarters that during that time he had been in secret communication with the Colonial Secretary. Opposition members of the Select Committee were eager on party grounds to discredit Chamberlain. In particular, suspicion had gathered round the London activities of Rhodes's confidential agent, Harris, who, though summoned before the Cape Committee, had failed to appear. Rhodes was the first witness to be called. He was allowed to read a statement in which he boldly admitted that out of sympathy for the grievances of the Uitlanders he had assisted the movement in Johannesburg with his purse and influence. He had concealed his actions from the Board of Directors of the B.S.A. Company. With reference to the Raid itself, he declared that Jameson went in without his authority and concluded by saying that "in all my actions I was greatly influenced by my belief that the policy of the present Government of the South African Republic was to introduce the influence of another Foreign Power into the already complicated system of South Africa, and thereby render more difficult in the future the closer union of the different States." Rhodes was careful not to be more precise in his reference to Germany and not to draw in the names of other friends and supporters.

The Times was soon ranked as a supporter. Harcourt sought to establish that Rhodes, after Harris's departure, was in direct communication with P.H.S. He questioned him very closely about the telegram he sent to Col. Rhodes on December 13:

From J. A. Stevens [for Cecil Rhodes], Cape Town to Col. Rhodes, Johannesburg. December 13, 1895. On Company's service.

Dr. Jameson wires most strongly to urge no postponement of shareholders' meeting, and let J. H. Hammond inform weak partners any delay most injurious. Dr. Wolff will explain fully reasons at directors' meeting. The London *Times* also cables confidentially to that effect. Postponement of meeting would be a most unwise course.

In answer to Harcourt, Rhodes would mention no names, but said the information "came from the person who dealt with the Colonial articles of *The Times*." He added the unsought explanation that he believed it was sent entirely on that person's

<sup>2</sup> Produced by a clerk of the Telegraph Department, Cape Town, at the Pretoria trial April 27, 1896. Cf. Appendix A, No. 52, of the Cape Blue Book.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The reference is to the cable from Flora Shaw to Rhodes, No. 164, dated December 12, 1895, printed *infra*, p. 232.

#### THE JAMESON RAID AND THE INQUIRY

own judgment and without instructions from any of the others connected with the paper. Harcourt returned to the point at the next meeting of the Committee. He then said that Rhodes's use of the message that The Times was pressing for immediate action led him "to believe that the persons who sent that message (I do not ask as to any individual) knew what you were doing, that you were preparing an insurrection and an invasion, and that they were pressing you to accelerate it." At this point Chamberlain interposed to say that he understood the telegram to refer entirely to the insurrection in Johannesburg and not to an invasion. Harcourt accepted this vital distinction, but pressed Rhodes to say whether the sender of the message, i.e., "the person who dealt with the Colonial articles in The Times" was aware of his plans. Rhodes professed himself unable to give an exact answer as he did not "think" that he had been in direct communication with that person.

Rhodes was also questioned about the Johannesburg "letter" which Jameson used as his invitation to march. He admitted to Harcourt that it must have been cabled to *The Times* by his instruction, but he was unable to remember much about it. He did not know who had dated it "December 28," or why it had been written very much earlier; he had never intended the letter to be taken literally in London; he merely thought that the people at home ought to be informed that Jameson had been in communication with the Johannesburg Reformers and that they had once asked for help.

The examination of Rhodes did little to expose the connexion, regarded in many quarters as intimate, of *The Times* with the Raid. Rhodes had been allowed to suppress the name of Flora Shaw and of any other person, at P.H.S. or otherwise, connected with *The Times*; he had not been made to explain why the "letter" was sent to *The Times* rather than to any other London newspaper. Jameson, who was only in the witness-box for a short time, did not divulge any fresh facts concerning the "letter." He considered the original to have been deliberately left undated. It was his understanding that he was to insert the date when, in his judgment, the time was ripe for acting upon it. He dated it "December 20," because that was the day on which he was asked by Cape Town for a copy.

The evidence of the more talkative Harris enabled the Committee to learn a little more of what had gone on behind the scenes. Harris disclosed that he himself had destroyed a number of inter-Colonial telegrams addressed to the Company

#### THE HARRIS-RHODES CABLES

in Cape Town during the period of the preparations for the Raid. He gave as his reason that two members of the Reform Committee had been handed over to Kruger by the Attorney-General at Cape Town and he had feared that he might be handed over as well, with incriminating papers. When Harcourt asked him about the telegrams he had sent from London to Rhodes, he said that he had surrendered these to Rhodes when, at the end of January, 1896, they came to England together. They were private confidential messages sent in obedience to Rhodes's instructions and he regarded them as Rhodes's property. He refused to say whether they had since been shown to anybody at the Colonial Office. The Committee, least of all the Opposition members, did not intend to let the matter rest at this point. Hawksley, the Chartered Company's solicitor, was made to put in the Company's cable code. He was also requested to produce the missing Harris-Rhodes cables which, it was understood, had been in his possession since they were returned by the Colonial Office in June, 1896. The examination of Harris was adjourned until the cables were available.

On May 7, the Directors of the Chartered Company were well represented. It was now expected that a decision would be taken on the question of the production of the cables. Mr. J. D. Pender, managing director of the Eastern Telegraph Company, said that he received the summons from the Committee for the production of certain telegrams. Mr. Fletcher Moulton, Q.C., for the Company, then pointed out that under the Telegraph Convention of 1875, originals and copies could only be communicated to the sender or receiver on proof of his identity, or to the authorized representative of either of them. The Telegraph Company had received letters from the agents of the sender and receiver (Rhodes and Harris) directing them not to deliver the telegrams to any person except themselves and intimating that the Company would be held responsible if it did so. Upon this, the room was cleared to allow the Committee to consider the question. The Attorney-General's view was that the Committee had authority to order the production of the telegrams. Mr. Pender thereupon handed to the Clerk of the Committee originals of the telegrams sent from England and service copies1 of telegrams received from abroad from November 1 onwards. Those of an earlier date had been destroyed in the ordinary course of business. On May 18 when Harris was recalled, 33 cables sent between Rhodes and himself during November, 1895, had been decoded and copies were then in

<sup>1</sup> Copies which had been taken in the course of transmission.

the hands of the Committee.<sup>1</sup> They were, of course, available to the Press. At last it was possible, incidentally, to canvass the part played by *The Times*.

The cables now produced and decoded established among many other facts the identity of "the person who dealt with the Colonial articles in *The Times*." No fewer than four messages from Harris to Rhodes and one from Rhodes to Harris mentioned "Flora." The texts were:

- No. 6. To Veldschoen [Rhodes] Cape Town, November 4, 1895
- ... I have already sent Flora to convince J. Chamberlain support *Times* newspaper and if you can telegraph course you wish *Times* to adopt now with regard to Transvaal Flora will act.—Dr. HARRIS [London].
- No. 8. To Veldschoen, Cape Town, November 5, 1895
- . . . We reported your letter to A. Beit during the month of August to these and Flora we have these solid.—Dr. HARRIS [London].
- No. 31. To Dr. Harris c/o Bookmark, London, November 25, 1895 See Flora and get some one to review book three Great African Chiefs by Missionary Lloyd just published by Fisher Unwin.—C. J. RHODES [Cape Town].
- No. 32. To Veldschoen, Cape Town, November 26, 1895

Very confidential . . . Dr. Harris will leave [London] 30 of this month without fail. Flora suggest[s] December 16 celebrate Pretoria district 1880 . . . Dr. Harris [London].

No. 33. To Veldschoen, Cape Town, November 29, 1895

We have given British South Africa Company code to Flora. She has been registered Telemones London. Register on your side this address telegrams go direct. Keep her well informed.—Dr. HARRIS [London].

The name of Flora Shaw could no longer be kept out of the proceedings.<sup>2</sup> Harris was duly asked to state the object of giving Miss Shaw the B.S.A. Company code. His answer as recorded in the Report, repeated more fully Rhodes's statement protectively interpreting her action as solely personal and private:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Appendix 14 of Report of Select Committee on British South Africa (July 13, 1897) for full list.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> During the examination of Lionel Phillips, earlier in the hearing, Labouchere had introduced her name. Having failed to make Phillips remember whether he ever saw the confidential cable [No. 164—p. 232] from *The Times* deprecating postponement, Labouchere then drew his attention to a letter (published in a Transvaal Dutch newspaper) supposed to have been written by Phillips to Alfred Beit of Messrs. Wernher, Beit. In it occurred the words: "Take care that Flora Shaw has her share." Phillips denied that it had any reference to the matter in hand. He had known Miss Shaw and her family for a long time. When she came to South Africa years before he had invested a little money for her. As Labouchere was unable to produce the copy of the letter the matter dropped.

#### WHY MISS SHAW HAD THE COMPANY'S CODE

I was leaving England. Miss Shaw knew Mr. Rhodes very well indeed; she had always been, and was then, a very strong supporter of Mr. Rhodes's policy; we knew, and Mr. Rhodes knew, that she wrote the colonial articles in the leading English paper, and we thought it wise that Miss Shaw should be kept informed by Mr. Rhodes as regards what was transpiring. I wish to say this, that Miss Shaw never in any shape or form committed *The Times*, or used the words *The Times* to me as an entity; she always spoke of herself. Whenever the words *The Times* has been used, it has not been used in the sense that Miss Shaw pledged *The Times* to do anything at all; she never even pledged herself to do anything. All she said was that if she had information, and if she approved, then, and then only, would she give support. She in no sense gave a blind and unqualified support to anything.

Chairman.—She was in that sense a means of communication with the Press?

H.—Yes, in that sense.

Fortunately, the Chairman asked no searching questions about the telegrams, preferring to put his questions in the form of suggestions, to which the witness needed give only a bald affirmative. Thus Harris explained that the phrase "the plan of Dr. Jameson," which occurred in several of the telegrams, meant merely the plan of placing a force on the border for use in an emergency. It did not require Jameson to initiate anything like a Raid. Harris explained that the "letter" referred to in No. 81 dealt with the transfer of the Protectorate. He knew that Beit had revealed its contents to Miss Shaw. The word "these" in the sentence "we have these solid" referred to E. Fairfield, Sir R. Meade and Col. Goold Adams.<sup>2</sup> Harris had mentioned the request in No. 31 to Miss Shaw and he thought the book was reviewed.3 The date suggested by Miss Shaw in No. 32 was well known in the Transvaal as Dingaan's Day. He agreed that her suggestion meant that December 16 would be a suitable day for the rising in Johannesburg.

Harcourt's inquiry into the cables was more thorough. He interpreted No. 6 literally, and asked Harris's authority for saying that *The Times* would adopt whatever course Rhodes indicated by telegraph to Miss Shaw. Harris replied that the Transvaal topic in question was not the proposed rising, but the closing of the Drifts. He maintained that Rhodes would not have understood the telegram in the literal sense; that Rhodes knew that Miss Shaw would never commit *The Times* 

<sup>1</sup> See p. 224.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Resident Commissioner, Bechuanaland Protectorate.

<sup>3</sup> Miss Shaw, giving evidence, said the book was not reviewed in The Times.

in advance in any way and that he could only count on her support at Printing House Square if she personally approved his policy. Harris declined to say whether he had seen any telegrams sent direct from Rhodes to Miss Shaw.

Labouchere made persistent efforts to penetrate the mystery of Miss Shaw's knowledge and the degree to which *The Times* was involved in the preparations for the Raid. He asked Harris: "Did you see anybody else connected with *The Times* besides Miss Shaw in regard to this matter?" Harris replied: "No, never. I certainly never saw Mr. Buckle; and I have not seen Mr. Bell for years." Harris said he had no knowledge of the "letter" until he returned to South Africa. There was certainly no copy of it over here at the time. He admitted that he cabled it to *The Times*, on Rhodes's instructions.

Rhodes had asked him to get a copy of it from Jameson, and when that copy arrived it was found to be dated December 20. On Saturday, December 28, Harris had received Jameson's ultimatum that he would publish the "letter" and make his own "flotation." Hence when he forwarded the "letter" to London he changed the date from December 20 to December 28. Harris himself changed the date believing that he was acting in accordance with Jameson's wishes.<sup>1</sup>

The production of the November telegrams (Nos. 6, 8, 32, 33) between Harris and Rhodes revealed some of the doctor's manoeuvres. Harris, it is evident, had given Rhodes the impression that *The Times* was under his influence; also that Miss Shaw was his instrument of communication with Chamberlain. Further examination made it clear that Harris had exaggerated the success of his mission. His evidence was sometimes contradictory, but although Labouchere attempted to overawe him nothing further was extracted. It became more essential to the Opposition members to know exactly how incriminating were the missing cables. Another profitable line suggested itself—to investigate Miss Shaw's relations with Chamberlain and Rhodes. Labouchere therefore moved a resolution that Hawksley should be called upon to produce the cables that he showed to Chamber-

¹ The history of the "letter" was completed by Charles Leonard. He appeared before the Committee as one who intended to give a lecture on the righteousness of the Uitlanders' cause rather than to answer questions. He handed to the Committee and the Press a printed statement of over 200 foolscap pages, but this document was not allowed to be "put in." Though he was restrained from reading aloud, he overwhelmed the Committee with floods of information on the pre-Raid situation in Johannesburg. He admitted that he was the author of the "letter" and had been asked, he said, by Phillips to sign it as Chairman of the National Union. But Leonard refused, as he had no mandate from the National Union for such action. Eventually, however, he gave way and agreed to sign as a private individual, provided that the other leaders put their signatures to it.

#### MISS SHAW CALLED AS A WITNESS

lain; Miss Shaw, too, should be summoned to give evidence and to produce any cables she possessed relating to the matter.

Hawksley, taking his stand on the exemption given to Rhodes when he objected, also refused to put telegrams in without Rhodes's permission. The Attorney-General, notwithstanding. ruled that the Committee's order for the production of the telegrams must be obeyed. Hawksley maintained his refusal to produce them, and the matter was reported to the House of Commons. Labouchere pressed Chamberlain to make a personal appeal to Rhodes for his sanction. The Colonial Secretary said he was quite indifferent whether the documents he had had the opportunity of reading were made public or not; he added that he did not consider that Rhodes would be influenced by such a request. These telegrams were never produced. This was a triumph for Rhodes and his friends. But Labouchere succeeded in his demand to have Miss Shaw brought into the witness-box. This was a triumph for him and his friends. It was not relished by The Times. Buckle, who had not been consulted at the time of the Raid, implored Miss Shaw to take all the responsibility upon her own shoulders and at all costs to keep The Times and its personalities out of mention. Bell took a sturdier line. Miss Shaw had nothing to be ashamed of. Walter looked to the cause. He believed in Britain's Imperial mission, believed in Rhodes and believed in Miss Shaw. She herself, apart from feeling that Buckle's attitude was disappointing, was unafraid. Mrs. Bell notes on May 23: "F[lora] knows now she is called to S[outh] A[frica] Committee. She does not mind much, and is still sure she did all things rightly, and thinking ditto again under same circumstances. She has a bad cold but is quite plucky." There was a large attendance at the sitting of the Committee on May 25. For the first time two ladies were admitted to the room-Miss Shaw and her sister. Miss Shaw faced calmly what would have been a severe ordeal for most women. She replied clearly and unhesitatingly to all questions. She was a correspondent for The Times, she said. The subject of the first question was Telegram No. 6, i.e., Harris to Veldschoen, Cape Town, November 4, 1895:

. . . I have already sent Flora to convince J. Chamberlain support *Times* newspaper and if you can telegraph course you wish *Times* to adopt now with regard to Transvaal Flora will act.

Miss Shaw's answer was that the first phrase was extremely inaccurate; she would not have accepted any mission from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Committee decided to drop the matter, as any further delay would have necessitated holding over their Report until the next session of the House of Commons.

Harris to go to Chamberlain; he was not in a position to send her anywhere.

With regard to telegram No. 8,1 Miss Shaw denied that the word "solid" in the last phrase referred to her. She accepted the Chairman's suggestion that there should be a full-stop after the word "Flora."

In telegram No. 32, Harris had referred to Miss Shaw's suggestion of the date, December 16. She admitted that "in the course of an idle conversation" she had suggested that there would be a certain historic justice in a section of Englishmen declaring their independence on the same day as that on which the Boers had declared their independence of English authority in 1880.

Miss Shaw accepted telegram No. 33 as an accurate statement of fact, since the code of the B.S.A. Company had been placed at her disposal. She explained that after Harris left England she had used the code on three occasions onlyin order to send cablegrams to Rhodes. When asked if she had the text of these three cablegrams in her possession, Miss Shaw said: "I never made any copy of them, and I have never seen them from that day to this. . . . I asked Mr. Rhodes when he came back to England if he could supply me with copies, and he told me that to the best of his belief they were burned." However, the witness thought she could remember the general drift of them, although she would rather not try to reproduce the exact words. Her first coded cable, sent towards the middle of December, asked Rhodes for the probable date of the rising as she thought it important, for journalistic reasons, that she should know. Rhodes replied that he believed it was going to be towards the beginning of the New Year. She sent a second cable, three or four days later, saying that she thought delay was dangerous in view of the general situation. She probably indicated the general situation. This was the one<sup>2</sup> (i.e., No. 164) that was quoted in South Africa. She did not recollect receiving any answer to it. Towards the end of December she sent a third cable indicating "that Germany and Venezuela3 and everything else was making the situation very complicated" and that there were special reasons why the rising should be at once. She was not certain whether she received a reply to this, but if so it was a purely formal one.

The only other use she made of the code was to decipher a telegram announcing that Dr. Jameson had crossed the border

<sup>1</sup> See p. 224.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For the text and history of these three cables, Nos. 73, 164, 106, see *infra*, p. 232. <sup>3</sup> The American attitude, and the Cleveland message in particular, were not without influence upon German policy. See *infra*, p. 238.

#### MISS SHAW EXPLAINS THE CABLES

with his troops and giving the cabled "letter" about women and children. The "letter" was not coded. These were the only telegrams she received and the only occasions on which she used the code.

Miss Shaw stated that she communicated freely with Harris, but not with Maguire or Beit. Whenever Rhodes came to England he was in the habit of meeting her and talking over South African politics. From time to time he sent her information on his general plans and policies. The witness asked to be allowed to make quite clear the distinction between the "Jameson Plan" mentioned in the telegrams, and the subsequent action of Jameson, i.e., the "Jameson Raid." She told Harcourt that the "Jameson Plan," as it was put before her by Harris, was that a rising was to take place at Johannesburg. This, the reader will remember, was the distinction upon which Chamberlain insisted. Miss Shaw said it was common knowledge in 1894 that a rising was almost inevitable, and all through the early part of 1895 she watched South African affairs very closely. She then observed that chartered troops were concentrating on the borders of Bechuanaland.1 and was unable to assign any cause for it. During her holiday in July and August she pondered on this concentration, and wondered if it had any connexion with the development of affairs in Johannesburg. Accordingly, when she came back to London in September, she tackled Harris about it; after some hesitation, he laid bare the "Jameson Plan." She understood that a bloodless revolution was shortly expected in Johannesburg, the existing Government was to be overthrown, a provisional Government set up in its place and the High Commissioner was to be invited to come up and mediate between them and Kruger. But there was another part of the "Plan." Jameson was to hold his force ready on the border in case the situation got out of hand, but not to use it until the High Commissioner called upon him to do so. This was the arrangement which Miss Shaw approved. It was not known to the Committee whether Chamberlain had prior knowledge of this portion of the "Plan."

Harcourt showed curiosity concerning Miss Shaw's visits to the Colonial Office. She told him that for the previous seven years she had been in the habit of going there once, sometimes more, every week "for the purpose of generally discussing any situation which is going on, or having any information which at the Colonial Office it is judged proper to give me." Harcourt thought

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This was obviously incorrect as the troops were not moved to Mafeking and Pitsani until November. She later sent a written correction asking for the words "military activity in Rhodesia" to be substituted.

it probable that she also communicated, as well as received. information. Miss Shaw agreed that there had been one such occasion, i.e., on December 30. Harcourt enquired whether she thought it desirable to reveal the information then disclosed. Her explanation, as she gave it, contained no sensational revelation. It was simply that she had been the first person to give the Colonial Office information that the Raid had occurred. She had been shown a telegram1 on December 30 in Beit's office to the effect that Jameson had disregarded instructions and crossed the border with 400 men. The news was a tremendous shock to her, as all she expected was that the Johannesburg rising had begun. Realizing the gravity of the situation, she went straight to the Colonial Office and told Sir Robert Meade. Chamberlain was spending the Christmas holiday in Birmingham, but he returned immediately. Within an hour or two the Colonial Office had their own information, and she "had no more to do with the matter."

Miss Shaw firmly disclaimed any foreknowledge that the rising in Johannesburg was being promoted in Cape Town and London. Her intimate knowledge of the Uitlanders' grievances and of their rebellious mood during the past year led her to believe that they were organizing their own spontaneous movement. Harris never told her that he was buying arms, at the Chartered Company's expense, to send to Johannesburg. She knew arms were being sent there from England, but understood that they were being acquired directly by the Uitlanders. Rhodes told her about his share in the rising when he came to England after the Raid. She knew nothing about it beforehand. She never mentioned to the Colonial Office what she had learnt in September about the "Jameson Plan." In further evidence, Miss Shaw revealed that she showed Chamberlain the "letter" before it was published in The Times. Harris's telegram containing it arrived at her private address at about 5.30 a.m. on December 31. She took one copy down in the morning to the Colonial Office, and there showed it to the Colonial Secretary. The second copy was sent to The Times, as she knew it was intended for publication. She accepted it unquestioningly as a bona fide explanation of Jameson's action. She added that that was why she had its contents made public.

Upon this, Harcourt asked her if she had supplied the information which inspired the "rather remarkable leading article in *The Times* upon the subject of this Raid, rather objecting to the course that Mr. Chamberlain had taken in so suddenly

<sup>1</sup> The telegram was not produced to the Committee.

#### MISS SHAW PROTECTS OFFICE SECRETS

endeavouring to stop it." Miss Shaw answered resolutely, "I do not feel as if I could give any answer about what takes place in *The Times* office." Harcourt did not press the point. Campbell-Bannerman then said to her: "I understand you would rather not answer questions as to your relations with or your communications to *The Times* newspaper?" Miss Shaw assented to this considerate suggestion; the Committee agreed, and the matter was dropped. Besides Miss Shaw, others, both named and unnamed, felt relieved when the inviolability of Miss Shaw's "relations with or communications to *The Times*" was accepted as a principle.

Blake returned to the subject of the three cables Miss Shaw remembered sending to Rhodes. Why had she cabled that "it" should take place at once, considering that she did not know that Rhodes was engineering the whole affair? Miss Shaw recognized that that was a very natural question. She answered that she cabled confidentially to Rhodes, rather than to Phillips, because she had a code for the purpose. She knew that Rhodes, on account of his position in South Africa, would keep himself fully informed on the subject of the rising. She did not know that he had any more to do with it than that. Labouchere tried to make her admit that in this same telegram she had said that it was Chamberlain who wished "it" to come off soon. Miss Shaw preferred to think that her message was worded in more general terms. She assured the Attorney-General that she sent these three telegrams entirely on her own responsibility. They were not written in consultation nor dictated to her by anybody. Miss Shaw later sent a note amending the latter phrase, on the ground that she had not correctly heard the Attorney-General's question. She went on: "I am not in a position to say absolutely that I consulted no one. If I had made this distinction before the Committee it is possible that I might have been asked to say whom I consulted. I should in such a case have asked the Committee not to press me for the name, as to give it would be to introduce a new name wholly immaterial to the subject of inquiry, and the name of a personal friend, who, but for his friendship, would not have discussed the matter with me."1

In the case of the third cable Miss Shaw said it was possible that she might have made some reference to the Colonial Office, without of course committing them in any way. Chamberlain, therefore, took the opportunity to inquire whether any such reference could have been derived from anything he had ever

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It is not fanciful to suggest that the personal friend was the Manager of *The Times*. See *infra*, p. 246.

said to her. Miss Shaw gave an emphatic negative. She could not have said that the Colonial Office wanted "it" to come off soon, because she did not know that. She could only give it as her opinion that they might so want it. That ended the examination. Miss Shaw was thanked by the Chairman for the very clear way in which she had given her evidence. The ordeal was over for Miss Shaw and for Bell. Her friends were delighted. Bell went straight down to see her and to congratulate her. He had not himself ventured into Court but had sent Monypenny, whose report praised Miss Shaw's evidence as done in her best style.

At the next meeting of the Committee on May 28, Beit was examined. He remembered having several general discussions with Miss Shaw about South African affairs but could not recollect whether the "Jameson Plan" was mentioned or not Rochfort Maguire, Rhodes's proxy on the Board of the Chartered Company in London, was a little less vague. He told the Committee that after Harris returned to South Africa at the end of November, his information as to the progress out there was chiefly derived from telegrams sent to Miss Shaw. He had no other South African source of information on this confidential subject. It thus became clear that little further would be learnt without the production of the telegrams sent to Rhodes, or received by Miss Shaw from him, upon which Miss Shaw had been examined on May 25.1 Hence, on June 1, the Committee made an order for the production of the telegrams which were forwarded to and received from South Africa by Miss Shaw. This was decidedly awkward for Flora Shaw and Bell. When the original texts were secured and decoded, it was certain that Miss Shaw would be recalled.

On July 2 the Committee met to consider the new telegrams. They consisted of a series of ten, three of which, Nos. 73, 164 and 106, were addressed by Miss Shaw (Telemones) to Rhodes (Veldschoen):

No. 73. To Veldschoen, Cape Town, December 10, 1895

Can you advise when will you commence the plans, we wish to send at earliest opportunity sealed instructions representative of the London *Times* European capitals; it is most important using their influence in your favour.—FLORA SHAW.

No. 164. To Veldschoen, Cape Town, December 12, 1895

Delay dangerous sympathy now complete but will depend very much upon action before European powers given time [to] enter a protest which as European situation considered serious might paralyse Government: general feeling in the Stock Market very suspicious.—FLORA SHAW.

<sup>1</sup> See supra, p. 228.

#### TELEMONES TO VELDSCHOEN

No. 106. To Veldschoen, Cape Town, December 17, 1895

Held an interview with Secretary [Dr. Leyds] Transvaal, left here on Saturday for Hague Berlin Paris, fear in negotiation with these parties. Chamberlain sound in case of interference European powers but have special reason to believe wishes you must do it immediately.—Flora Shaw.

Besides these three dispatched by Miss Shaw, there were eight sent to her telegraphic address, Telemones, by Harris and Rhodes:

No. 402. To Telemones, London. Cape Town, December 20, 1895 Thanks. Are doing our best, but these things take time. Do not alarm Pretoria from London.—R. HARRIS.

No. 941. To Telemones, London. Cape Town, December 27, 1895 Everything is postponed until after January 6. We are ready but divisions at Johannesburg.—R. HARRIS.

No. 1503. To Telemones, London. Cape Town, December 30, 1895. Strictly confidential. Dr. Jameson moved to assist English in Johannesburg because he received strong letter begging Dr. Jameson to come signed by leading inhabitants. This letter will be telegraphed you verbatim tomorrow. Meantime do not refer in Press. We are confident of success. Johannesburg united and strong on our side. Dissensions [they] have been stop[ped] except two or three Germans.—R. HARRIS.

No. 1556. To Telemones, London. Cape Town, December 30, 1895 Inform Chamberlain that I shall get through all right if he supports me, but he must not send cable like he sent to High Commissioner in South Africa. To-day the crux is, I will win and South Africa will belong to England.—C. J. Rhodes.

(Signature of Sender) F. R. Harris, for C. J. Rhodes, Premier.

No. 1557. To Telemones, London. Cape Town, December 30, 1895. Following letter was received by Dr. Jameson before he decided to go, but you must not use letter for Press until we cable authority, it is signed by leading inhabitants of Johannesburg.—R. HARRIS.

[Here follows un-coded form of "letter" printed in *The Times*, January 1,1896. *Cf*. Cape Committee Blue Book, No.61 of Appendix A.] (Signature of Sender) F. R. Harris, for C. J. Rhodes, Premier.

No. 1877. To Telemones, London. Cape Town, December 31, 1895 Unless you can make Chamberlain instruct the High Commissioner to proceed at once to Johannesburg the whole position is lost. High Commissioner would receive splendid reception and still turn position

to England advantage but must be instructed by cable immediately. The instructions must be specific as he is weak and will take no responsibility.—C. J. RHODES.

(Signature of Sender) J. A. Stevens.

No. 1687 (Not in code). To Telemones, London.

Cape Town, December 31, 1895

You can publish letter.

(Signature of Sender) E. Seccull, for Secretary.

Miss Shaw was now called into the witness-box for a second time. On this occasion all the Opposition members of the Committee were in their places; Chamberlain came in half an hour later. Buckle and Bell were again plunged into a state of extreme nervousness. The witness, facing the Committee with her usual composure, was as clear in her answers as before. She began by repeating her desire to answer freely and frankly, in order to clear up once and for all the so-called mystery. She was so ready and fluent in reply to questions that the extreme rapidity of her speech was noted. It more than once baffled those who followed her with close attention in the attempt to plumb the significance of her answers. She admitted that the cables now produced revealed notable deficiencies in her former evidence, though she did not agree that their contents as revealed gave more ground for suspicion than her original statements. But Labouchere proved his point that Miss Shaw had told Rhodes, in the words of telegram No. 106, that she had "special reason to believe" Chamberlain "wishes you must do it immediately."

Next in question were the two cables, Nos. 1556 and 1877, sent by Rhodes on December 30 and 31. The threatening tone combined with the compromising nature of these messages from Rhodes delivered to Chamberlain through Flora Shaw greatly startled the Committee. Immediately, Miss Shaw apologized for having forgotten their existence. An unfortunate breakdown of the submarine cable occurred at the time; telegrams were delivered irregularly; these two arrived after all the others; they came on the evening of December 31 and the early morning of January 1 respectively, when she was in the middle of a tremendous amount of work. Thus preoccupied, Miss Shaw had ignored them and later had forgotten all about them. Miss Shaw was now very anxious to give the Committee an absolutely exact account of these telegrams; she had been to the office of the Eastern Telegraph Company, and had checked with them the times when the wires had been delivered to her from the

#### WHY MISS SHAW FORGOT

office. No. 1877, when produced, brought to her mind a recollection of having sent a reply to it probably the same day. She had asked the Company to search their records, but they could not trace it. Again the Committee appear to have been impressed with the candour of the witness. She proceeded to tell them how she turned the matter over in her mind; and how, having the idea of looking in her household receipts for the year, she actually found a receipt for a fourth message. It was sent on January 1 and must have been a very short one, as it only cost £2 15s. 0d. So she felt it was now evident that she had sent four messages to Rhodes instead of three. She mentioned this missing telegram only because she "wanted not in any way to be inaccurate in any detail." She thought she had merely told Rhodes "Chamberlain is awfully angry." That was all she could now remember about the telegrams.

But the Chairman said there were points about the text of some of them that he would be glad to have explained. Miss Shaw then addressed her powers of exposition to the wording of the telegrams. The witness was prepared to agree that they did need explanation; in fact there were several reasons why they were liable to be misunderstood. They were only intended for Rhodes to read; they were subject to the limitations of a code; they were made as short as possible to spare her own private purse, and they were sent out in haste under heavy pressure of work. She would much like to give the Committee a frank explanation of exactly what she intended to convey in them, because "there has been so much of what I may call mysterymongering about all this business that the evil of keeping anything back is infinitely greater than the evil of producing everything and allowing the public to form its own opinion upon it." No one on the Committee disputed the last statement. Miss Shaw was then permitted to explain the telegrams, phrase by phrase.

Miss Shaw's exegesis applied meanings of her own to several words in the text of the cables she had sent. She emphasized that when she wrote "you" and "your," as in Nos. 73 and 106, she never meant Rhodes personally but always the British in South Africa. She looked on him, the principal Englishman in the country, as the representative of his countrymen. She was not wiring to Rhodes as the leader of the conspirators but as a means of communication with the whole body of Uitlanders. Her first telegram (No. 73) to Rhodes was intended to ask him when the rising in Johannesburg would take place, as she wished to com-

municate a short and lucid summary of the whole situation in South Africa to The Times foreign correspondents. Had she been writing in full, she would have phrased it to convey explicitly that she would need to ask the Manager's permission to make that communication. Here Miss Shaw added that up to that time South African affairs had been dealt with wholly in the Colonial Department of The Times and, in consequence, the degree to which the paper's European correspondents were informed on the South African situation was unknown to her. She actually saw the Manager shortly after sending that cable, laid before him her information on the coming rising and asked his permission to send some supplementary information to the Foreign Correspondents. The Manager agreed to her doing so. The matter was not mentioned to the Editor. The memorandum<sup>1</sup> was only sent to minor correspondents, for instance the one at Brussels, as she discovered that the principal correspondents were well abreast of the matter.

Thus Miss Shaw picked out the term "sealed instructions" from the code-book to intimate to Rhodes that the correspondents were to treat her letters in confidence. She thought she received a reply to this telegram, running roughly "We think about the beginning of the New Year." But there was no record of it at the Telegraph Company's office. Her telegram was sent wholly on her own responsibility. The Editor did not know that it was sent, and only learnt about it some weeks subsequently. In the next telegram (No. 164) Miss Shaw used the phrase "Sympathy now complete" to mean that public opinion in England generally sympathized with the grievances of the Uitlanders. She thought that "delay was dangerous" because the European situation at that time looked very threatening. If the plans for a rising in Johannesburg became known beforehand, it was likely that the European Powers would step in and attempt to influence the Imperial Government. Her understanding of the plan was that the English in Johannesburg, having repudiated Kruger's Government, would immediately appeal to the British High Commissioner. In other words, they were going to appeal from the local authority to the suzerain Power. But the Imperial Government might have great difficulty in turning the situation to advantage, if it were hampered by protests from the European Powers. She looked on the stock market merely as a kind of barometer of public opinion. It was evident from the selling going on there that the plan was becoming an open secret.

<sup>1</sup> No copy of it has been discovered.

## CONVERSATION AT THE COLONIAL OFFICE

The first words of telegram No. 106 were a plain statement of fact. She had seen Dr. Leyds, the Secretary of the Transvaal, who had then left for The Hague, Berlin and Paris. She meant Rhodes to understand by "fear in negotiation with these parties" that she believed Leyds had gone to the Continent for the purpose of fomenting a European opposition to the British revolution in Johannesburg. Leyds had professed complete ignorance of the whole position when talking to her. From this she inferred that he had a great deal more information than he chose to reveal. She thought the expression "Chamberlain sound in case of interference European powers" hardly required any explanation. The Colonial Secretary had many times declared in public that he would never tolerate any interference by a Foreign Power with the British position in South Africa. She had telegraphed that particular sentence to Rhodes because, when Chamberlain first took office, there was a suggestion by some people in South Africa that he was a Little Englander in his policy. The remark greatly amused the Committee, who regarded it as evidence of Miss Shaw's ingenuousness. Chamberlain, who had throughout listened to her evidence with an impassive face, was at last seen to smile broadly.

The next question concerned her "special reason" for believing that Chamberlain wished them to "do it immediately." Miss Shaw's explanation created considerable excitement. She said she only meant to convey her personal opinion that the Colonial Office would prefer, if it were to be done at all, that it should be done at once. Every one who was interested in South Africa knew the state of affairs in the Transvaal. When she discussed affairs with members of the Colonial Office, the possibility of a rising in Johannesburg was always taken into account. One of the under-secretaries, in the course of a hypothetical conversation, had thrown out the remark, "Well, if the Johannesburgers are going to rise, it is to be hoped they will do it soon." Harcourt immediately asked who said this. After a moment's hesitation Miss Shaw answered: "It was Mr. Fairfield." Harcourt immediately suggested that she overheard Fairfield's remark on the day she sent off the "delay dangerous" telegram; but the Attorney-General intervened to say that that interview took place about five days later. Miss Shaw agreed it was about December 17 and added: "I felt it was so much better to say quite frankly what that came from: I do not want to make any concealment in the matter at all." She was sure that when Fairfield said those words he had no idea that an approximate date for the rising had been fixed. He certainly did not intend her to communicate his

casual remark to others. In general conversation with her he had more than once expressed doubt as to whether a rising would ever actually come to pass. Fairfield's remark, however. gained a special significance for her in view of her special knowledge that a rising was due. It made her feel that the rebellion was coming at exactly the wrong time, as far as the Colonial Office was concerned. The dispute with America over the Venezuelan border question was causing the Government grave anxiety. 1 But a short delay might make the time even less auspicious, and so she personally had advised immediate action. Bearing all this in mind she felt justified in advising the British in Johannesburg that the Colonial Office would find it more convenient to have the matter come to a head at once. The expression "you must do it immediately" meant, as she had already explained, that the British must make their rising immediately. It did not mean that Rhodes personally was expected to act.

At the time these three telegrams were sent, i.e., between December 10 and 17, she sincerely believed that there was simply to be a spontaneous rising in Johannesburg, of which Rhodes, as the most powerful Englishman in South Africa, would be kept informed. Harris had told her in September of Rhodes's desire to put Jameson on the border with a small force as a safeguard. She knew of no subsequent modifications in the plan. Nothing in these telegrams could have any reference to Jameson's Raid since she was given none of the details that led up to it. Miss Shaw accepted No. 402 as an answer to No. 106. She regarded the warning not to alarm Pretoria from London as a vague caution, having no particular significance. She was not in communication with anybody in Pretoria. No. 941 was quite straightforward. It postponed the date given her in an earlier telegram, the one she could not trace. The reasons for the "divisions" were now well known. Telegram No. 1503, announcing that Jameson had moved, was the one that, as she had already stated. arrived in the early morning at much the same time as No. 1557. and she read them together.

When Miss Shaw came to deal with the two messages from Rhodes to Chamberlain (Nos. 1556 and 1877), whose existence she had forgotten in her first examination, she made a surprising distinction between them. She accepted the second as a bona fide communication from Rhodes, but not the first. She knew that Harris had a general permission to send telegrams in Rhodes's name. One of the reasons why she had forgotten telegram 1556 beginning "Inform Chamberlain, &c." was that on reading it

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The policy of *The Times* towards America will be discussed in the completing volume of this work.

## CHAMBERLAIN'S ATTITUDE

she had immediately missed the authentic ring of Rhodes. Its style and tenor convinced her that it was merely an expression of Harris's opinion, but sent over Rhodes's signature to carry more weight. She attached to it "exactly the amount of importance which I thought ought to be attached to Dr. Harris's impression of the situation"; and took no action whatever upon it.¹ Now that it had been brought to her notice she was anxious to find Dr. Harris, in order to ask him whether he remembered sending it on his own authority. But she had learnt the day before this examination that Harris had gone abroad and nobody knew where he was. She had consulted Alfred Beit, who gave it as his opinion that Rhodes could not have sent that telegram because he was out all day on December 30.

Miss Shaw found nothing remarkable in the other telegram, No. 1877, except for "the curious wording of the first sentence," i.e., the words "Unless you can make Chamberlain instruct the High Commissioner to proceed at once to Johannesburg the whole position is lost." She did not enlarge upon her reasons for considering the phrase "curious." However, she did explain that on re-reading them a few days previously, their strangeness recalled her feelings when she first saw them. Her recollection was that she accepted the cable as a genuine message from Rhodes. She replied on January 1, "Chamberlain awfully angry." She took no action upon it, did not send it to the Colonial Office and only showed it to "people" in The Times Office. She gave Chamberlain the information contained in Nos. 1503, 1557 and 1687, but had not referred to the other two. Nos. 1556 and 1877. In any case, the obvious thing to do was to send up the High Commissioner. There was no need for her to suggest such a course to the Colonial Office or to try to influence its policy. She never suggested the High Commissioner was to go to Johannesburg to support Jameson and his raiders. He was going up there merely to take charge, and do his best to retrieve the position. Miss Shaw replied in the way she did since she thought "it was just as well that Mr. Rhodes should understand that Mr. Chamberlain was not to be made to do anything; and that he had better understand that Mr. Chamberlain's attitude was not exactly sympathetic to him at that moment." It was simply an expression of her own view; it was not sent as a communication from Chamberlain, although she had had the privilege of seeing him that morning. She did not think that any of these

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The false impression of overlordship that Harris conveyed in such messages as "I have already sent Flora to convince J. Chamberlain, &c." may have rankled. It is noticeable that the only asperity Miss Shaw showed in her evidence was when her negotiations with Harris were in question.

telegrams of hers were included in the collection sent by Hawksley to the Colonial Office, a statement that Chamberlain immediately confirmed.

Miss Shaw was then questioned on Hawksley's statement that cables sent to Rhodes from London in 1895 had supported the action taken in South Africa. Harcourt asked her whether she thought her telegrams to Rhodes might have been used in support of the action. Miss Shaw replied that she and everyone else was perfectly aware that one of them had been so used. 1 She had only wired "Delay dangerous" as a private personal communication between herself and Rhodes and very much regretted the use made of it by the conspirators, and the name of The Times had also been exploited. Campbell-Bannerman asked if it was usual for The Times correspondents to be used not only to acquire information but also to propagate certain policies in foreign countries. Miss Shaw at once reminded him that it had been agreed that she was at liberty to decline to answer questions dealing with the internal administration of *The Times* newspaper. But she thought he would appreciate the necessity for the paper's correspondents to be kept fully informed upon important events. The "sealed instructions" mentioned in her first telegram as being sent to Foreign Correspondents of The Times interested Blake and Labouchere. Labouchere presumed, and Miss Shaw denied, that she wrote these "as one being connected with the conspirators." She regarded herself simply as a journalist, whose business it was to secure information; and also, of course, to communicate it, all for the benefit of her journal. Her recommendation that the rising should take place on December 16 was, admittedly, a mere conversational indiscretion. Labouchere, pursuing the subject, failed to make Miss Shaw admit that her "sealed instructions" were attempts to dictate to the correspondents the line they should take when the rising occurred. They were simply a short exposition of the situation. If a copy had been preserved she would gladly have laid it before the Committee. She could not say much more on the subject: it was unfortunate but "it is not etiquette to speak in public of what is done in the internal organization of any large paper."

Labouchere made one last attempt to prove that Miss Shaw was the instrument of communication between the Colonial Office and the conspirators. He wanted to know to whom she had shown the telegrams she sent to Rhodes. Miss Shaw told him that she only showed them to one "person," and she did

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It had been placed on record in the cipher telegrams given in at the time of the Pretoria trial. See p. 221 for the telegram quoting Miss Shaw's No. 164.

## SELECT COMMITTEE'S REPORT

not think it was necessary to give his name as he was "somebody within The Times Office." Labouchere then hinted that Rhodes had only wished her to have the Company's confidential code because of her connexion with the Colonial Office. The witness gladly availed herself of the opportunity to make a public denial of this suggestion—one which she knew had led to many liberties being taken with her name. There was no truth whatever in it. She herself had asked for the code in order, as a journalist, to keep in touch with Rhodes and the progress of the whole Uitlander problem. She did not think that when Rhodes came to England he alluded to the text of these telegrams.1 The Chairman said that although they had intended summoning Harris to afford him an opportunity of explaining these telegrams, it was now discovered that he was abroad. The evidence taken by the Committee thus ended. The relief in P.H.S. was qualified by the reflection that the Committee would publish its report in due course.

It was published on July 13, 1897, and recorded an absolute and unqualified condemnation of the Raid. The members, except two. were agreed. Blake would not take any further part in the proceedings because Hawksley was not forced to produce the cables in his charge. Labouchere's own minority Report was discredited in advance by his failure to establish the charge on which he laid most stress—namely, that the Raid was organized for stock-jobbing purposes. He considered Miss Shaw's power of recollection "somewhat defective," and that the telegrams passing between her and Rhodes in December, 1895, were remarkable enough to be embodied in the Report. The relations of Miss Shaw with certain of the directors of the Chartered Company, with Harris and with the Colonial Office, were peculiar. After Harris's departure from England she was in secret communication with Rhodes, and at the same time had the run of the Colonial Office. It seemed obvious that she was expected to cable to Rhodes anything she could pick up in the Colonial Office that might be useful to him. But in neither the majority nor the minority Report was there any suggestion that Miss Shaw had acted other than on her own personal responsibility. The Times, happy at last, accepted the Report as closing a long and angry controversy. It saw little need to say more on the matter.

The debate on the Report in the House of Commons on July 26, 1897, was chiefly remarkable for Harcourt's chivalrous defence of Chamberlain and for the Colonial Secretary's own

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cf. her evidence during her first examination, Report of Select Committee, Question 8839. "I asked Mr. Rhodes when he came back to England if he could supply me with copies, and he told me that to the best of his belief they were burned."

magnificent speech in which he "vindicated himself with rare fire and eloquence, backed by the terse logic he has always at command."1 Labouchere made further protests against the "conspiracy of silence" in which, apparently, both Front Benches were involved. The Government speakers took the line that he was greatly exaggerating the importance of the telegrams, disclosed and undisclosed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer quoted, as an example of a sensational revelation turning out to be a mare's nest, Miss Shaw's passage, "special reason to believe (that Mr. Chamberlain) wishes you must do it immediately."2 He felt that Miss Shaw's explanations had completely exploded any damaging interpretation of the telegrams. Campbell-Bannerman considered that the "many awkward expressions" in Miss Shaw's telegrams melted away at the first inquiry. She had apparently based her much-discussed message to Rhodes on a mere casual expression used by Fairfield. The House cheered when he added, "One forgave the lady who sent it in consideration of her zeal and excited temperament, apparently; and from the fact that she probably, and certainly, did not realize the very pointed meaning which such an expression would have when received in South Africa." The Report was approved by a large majority. The Times of the next day hoped that a new era was opening in South Africa. Solid and real progress had already been achieved in restoring friendly relations between English and Dutch, and any further investigation into the Raid would only tend to reopen healing wounds. The whole thing was over and done with.

Concerning the evidence itself, it has been seen that in her first examination, on May 25, Miss Shaw gave fluent and convincing answers to questions on the five Harris-Rhodes telegrams which mentioned her name. The Chairman passed to the last one (No. 33) and, after learning that she had in fact been given the British South Africa Company's code, with a registered telegraphic address for direct communications from Rhodes, asked for particulars of the use made of them. Miss Shaw told him that she sent three coded telegrams to Rhodes, but she had never made any copy of them and was not aware that any copy was still in existence.<sup>3</sup> However, she would try to give their general drift from memory. Her recollected versions were accurate as far as they went, but as she said she "would rather not try to reproduce the words" she gave the Committee only a general impression

<sup>1</sup> The Times, July 27, 1897.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See Telegram No. 106, p. 233, supra.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> That it was unusual to dispatch an important coded telegram, requiring an answer without keeping a copy for reference, was not pointed out.

#### MISS SHAW'S RETICENCE

of her messages. She did not wish them to think that she addressed Rhodes ("when will you commence the plans," &c.) as though he was the leading spirit in a conspiracy. In the case of the third telegram (No. 106) she remembered saying there were special reasons "to think it should be at once," but forgot to refer to the phrase "Chamberlain sound in case of interference European powers." The fact that she received two coded cables from Rhodes (Nos. 1503 and 1877) with threatening messages for Chamberlain entirely escaped her memory.

It was not considered worth while to ask Miss Shaw if there was any special reason why matter intended for publication was sent to her, at her private address, rather than to the Editor, at Printing House Square. The ruling that she ought not to be required to answer questions dealing with what went on inside *The Times* Office enabled her to be reticent about the authorship of her three cables to Rhodes. The Attorney-General questioned her on her visits to the Colonial Office, and proceeded to ask if these cables were sent on her own responsibility. The inference was that she might have consulted the Colonial Secretary, and this she could emphatically deny. But afterwards, feeling scrupulous, she sent a note to the Chairman of the Committee, admitting that she had consulted a "personal friend."

The evidence of Maguire, Rhodes's proxy on the Board of the Chartered Company, was significant. He said that after Harris went back to South Africa, his information about the progress of affairs at the Cape or at Johannesburg was derived solely from telegrams sent to Miss Shaw. The originals of these had disappeared, but the Committee, intent on securing the text, had ordered the Eastern Telegraph Company to produce and decode them.

Miss Shaw's explanations were ingenious rather than complete. She reiterated that the telegrams were sent wholly on her own responsibility and that the Editor was only told about it some weeks subsequently. Labouchere interrupted her evidence to ask whether by "the Editor" she meant Moberly Bell or Buckle, to which she replied: "Mr. Buckle." Miss Shaw carried conviction in claiming to have acted on her own personal responsibility as a journalist, enjoying, it is true, a larger independence than was usually granted to members of the staff of *The Times*. But Miss Shaw was an unusual member of that staff. She had exceptional ability and exceptional privileges. Yet, as she was glad to tell the Committee, she was answerable to the Manager. She had to ask his permission to send the "sealed instructions" mentioned in her telegram No. 73 to *The Times* European Corre-

spondents. It is clear that the Editor was neither consulted nor informed.¹ The "instructions" were sent "through the Manager" to the Brussels Correspondent, but no copy, she added, of her memorandum was extant. Miss Shaw was, with difficulty, induced by Labouchere to state one particular case in which the memorandum was sent—to the correspondent at Brussels, Mme. Couvreur. In order to avoid referring to the correspondence sent out by the Manager, Miss Shaw may have enlarged the "sealed instructions" that "we wish to send" into an imaginary memorandum written by herself. In any case, she refrained from divulging the fact that, as she must have known, Bell had instructed Mme. Couvreur to go to The Hague which "is the place at which I wish you to be useful to us."2

The Times "people," and above all, Bell, had reason to congratulate themselves; first, upon Miss Shaw's respect for the paper, its Editor, and Manager, and upon her competence and readiness in parrying the questions of Labouchere, Harcourt and others. Without her keen sense of loyalty to her colleagues, her discretion and her adroitness, much embarrassment, to say the least, might have been caused to the "people" of The Times. She was not examined concerning the "personal friend" to whom she showed certain telegrams, or questioned about the identity of the "person" at The Times Office with whom she was accustomed to consult. The "fair play" of the Committee did not permit them to inquire into the internal management of Printing House Square. Thus, neither the precise details of the part played by The Times, nor the identity of the "person" at the office, i.e., the Manager, with whom Miss Shaw was in regular consultation, were made public. No further inquiry into the alleged connexion between The Times and the Chartered Company was made, but it was widely believed that there was a connexion of some kind which the investigators for one reason or another had failed to unearth.

There are one or two points that may be noted. In the first place, while Miss Shaw's evidence was that of a most frank, helpful and convincing witness, her deployment of the minimum number of telegrams was undoubtedly that of a supremely able tactician whose statements, as a woman's, carried the greater conviction. Campbell-Bannerman, speaking in the Commons debate on the Committee's Report, attributed the "indiscreet" statements in her cables to her "excited temperament" and to the fact that she "probably and [even] certainly did

<sup>1</sup> See p. 236.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bell to Mme. Couvreur, December 23, 1895. (See p. 176, supra.)

Forteilen Sympathy lehnochaft Einbekomme blutadern fuchskopf adelbeere bergwand grastaffet missgeburt Schranzers nachstopfe Spolteind basstimme grastaffet

Rollirend might paralyse Sabelbohne suspicious

Unbiedern-





#### MISS SHAW AND LABOUCHERE

not realize the very pointed meaning" which these words might have for others. It is not possible now to doubt that Miss Shaw used her woman's wits rather to conceal than to reveal. In the second place, it is certain that her policy of concealment was at no time adopted for the benefit of herself. The Times, quite properly, came first, but it did not come before the truth. She was loyal throughout to her own conviction, loyal to Rhodes, and loyal to the interests of The Times. But, as the office records show, Bell was more directly interested and concerned in the Transvaal situation than Flora Shaw thought it her duty to tell the Committee. She knew, too, that Harcourt and Labouchere, her keenest interrogators, were far more concerned to investigate Chamberlain's connexion with the Raid. To implicate The Times was not their purpose.1

But for varying reasons the Press at home and abroad<sup>2</sup> continued to discuss the significance of the paper's attachment to the cause of Rhodes. It was a cause that lay close to the heart of any fervid Anglo-Saxon Imperialist. Bell, and with him Walter, who had not been slow to take pride in the achievements of Cromer, could hardly have been less quick to admire Rhodes. Bell had become personally acquainted with him in 1893. He knew Jameson. His own brother-in-law, Norman Chataway, was a trooper in Jameson's force. He knew Flora Shaw particularly well. She was a friend of the family and was continually dining or staying at the Bells'. The completeness of Moberly Bell's confidence in her as a person led him to place the most absolute trust in her political discretion. As the community of ideas between Miss Shaw and himself was complete, he was from the first aware of her exchanges, whether as The Times correspondent or as a private individual, with Harris and Rhodes. Miss Shaw, it has been seen, replied to one of Labouchere's questions concerning her telegrams sent to Rhodes that they were shown only to one "person," whose name it was not necessary to give as he was "somebody within The Times office." The three telegrams in question, which Miss Shaw dispatched from her private address, were dated December 10, 12 and 17. They formed part of the series which the Committee on June 1 ordered to be produced and which, when decoded, brought Miss Shaw for the second time into the witness-box. Her reply to the Chairman's inquiry whether she had any means of determining

<sup>2</sup> For the impression created in Germany by what was there considered the paper's intimate connexion with the Chartered Company, see the next Chapter, pp. 258 ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The several witnesses who referred to the messenger who brought important news from Johannesburg to Cape Town on December 22 were allowed to conceal Younghusband's identity. The reason given was that he was in Johannesburg at the time of the inquiry and might be placed in personal danger if his participation in the conspiracy was revealed.

the accuracy of the decoded versions before the Committee was evasive. She then said that she saw the Manager shortly after sending cable No. 73 to Rhodes, asking for a date for the commencement of the plan, since "we" wished "to send at earliest opportunity sealed instructions representative of the London Times European capitals."

It would have been more exact to say that Miss Shaw had seen the Manager shortly before sending this telegram. difference between "before" and "after" represents the measure of Miss Shaw's concern to prevent the mention of Bell's name. The Manager's need for such protection was obvious. Bell had taken the risk of allowing Miss Shaw to commit The Times to the support of Rhodes in a conspiracy that was bound to lead to controversy at home, if it succeeded, and likely to lead to prosecution if it failed. The conspiracy had failed; the prosecution had resulted. Bell was open to severe censure from the Government. His only salvation lay in Miss Shaw's willingness to take personal responsibility for the telegrams and in her ability to convince the Committee accordingly. Miss Shaw's motive for screening Bell lay, doubtless, in her devotion to the Imperialist cause which the Manager fully shared. How close their association was is revealed by the drafts of the three telegrams referred to as dispatched on December 10, 12 and 17. All three texts, as decoded, are printed in the Report under Nos. 73, 164 and 106 respectively. All are addressed to "Veldschoen" (i.e. Rhodes) at Cape Town; all are signed "Telemones" (i.e. Flora Shaw). The originals were all sent in the official code given to Miss Shaw by Harris. Not one, however, was shown to the Manager after dispatch, as Miss Shaw told the Committee. Of all three the drafts remain. Drafts 73 and 164 are in ink and 106 in pencil; drafts 164 and 106 contain numerous alterations, while draft 73 has the appearance of a fair copy. The drafts, obviously hurried though they are, are all in the handwriting of Bell. The messages were all transcribed on to the official forms of the Eastern Telegraph Company and, before dispatch, were copied into the Manager's official letterbook. With admirable foresight the name of the sender in each case, but also in Bell's handwriting, is entered on the form as "F. Shaw, 130 Cambridge Street, Warwick Square, S.W."

As the books of the period, showing the details of contributors' and correspondents' expense accounts, have been destroyed, the question of the payment for these transmissions remains an open one. Bell's share in the drafting of the three must also remain doubtful since it is not unlikely that Miss Shaw was

Can you advise when will you commence the plan

S 2 Q

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Le sustantin Depresentating The Times

Current The Capital Aris most important

Current Sheir before in your farme.

## THE EVIDENCE OF BELL'S LETTER-BOOKS

in his office at the time. Whether he took the initiative at any time, or in any or all of these telegrams, cannot be determined. The degree of Bell's knowledge of these three cables, however, is proved by the P.H.S. documents to have been direct. It may be reasonably inferred that if his influence was so considerable in connexion with these three, it can hardly have been totally absent from the rest of the "Flora Shaw" messages. That he watched every detail of the crisis is clear from the remaining contents of the file and from Mrs. Bell's diary. The reply to the "Flora Shaw" telegram No. 73 of date December 10, addressed to "Veldschoen" and asking for the date of the "commencement of the plans," came addressed:

Cape Town, 11.12.1895

To Telemones, London

Schopferin abdorrofen new spielt Unbeladen.

The text of this reply cable was not shown to the Committee. The original lay in Bell's possession, decoded in Miss Shaw's handwriting:

We do think about new year C. J. RHODES.

This was the telegram which made Bell "very depressed" in the last week of 1895.1

The original of the reply to the "Flora Shaw" telegram No. 106,2 *i.e.*, that produced to the Committee as No. 402, was equally in Bell's possession; as also that of No. 1687, December 31 to Telemones: "You can publish letter." Telegrams from Younghusband, *e.g.*, that of December 27 on the Flag question, were addressed to Bell at his private address.

All things considered, the Manager had every reason to be satisfied with Miss Shaw's competence as a witness and to be pleased with the chivalrous attitude of the Committee towards her. The Committee as a whole, it may be presumed, were relieved that the inquiry did not discredit Chamberlain. Relief, indeed, was general in the country. A domestic political crisis had been avoided. Abroad, however, criticism spared neither Imperial Britain nor *The Times*.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 210 supra.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 233 supra for the texts of 106 and 402.

# X

## HOSTILE EUROPE

THE risks attending the British conquests in Africa, it was now recognized in Printing House Square, were not to be ignored. It was obvious enough from the dispatches of "Our Own" Correspondents all over Europe that neutral opinion not merely withheld support from Britain, but solidly ranged itself in favour of the Boers. The isolation of Britain now seemed no less precious even if it were less "splendid." Yet, while Britain was desirous of continuing to exercise a free hand in colonial affairs, it was realized that moral isolation imposed by world opinion might be attended by other more concrete inconveniences. It did not follow that because Britain was strong, she had no use for friends. The increasing length of British communications that accompanied the opening up of Africa emphasized the importance of the Mediterranean. The official tendency at home was to admit an interest in the Triple Alliance. It had been renewed by Germany, Austria and Italy in 1891 and British connexions with Italy and Austria were still being maintained. In other words, it was still felt here that Russian and French ambitions towards the Straits and Egypt, respectively, necessitated some sort of British-Italian understanding. This was the view of Salisbury in 1887 and of Rosebery, who had come to office in March, 1894. It has been seen that this view of affairs had never been fully shared by Wallace. For some time he had shown a consistent and increasing tendency to encourage an Anglo-Russian rapprochement. The scheme for a so-called "Triple Entente of the Near East" between Britain, Russia and France (including the Armenians), at the end of 1894, was decidedly favoured by The Times. Wallace was aware, having been informed by the correspondent at Vienna, that the project was known to and approved by Kálnoky, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister. The "Triple" commission to investigate the Armenian outrages was restricted to Great Britain, France and Russia as Powers having Consuls at Erzerum. If Austria had

<sup>1</sup> Lavino to Wallace, December 15, 1894. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

#### BRITAIN AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

possessed a Consul there, Kálnoky, Lavino wrote, would have sent an agent. This was only a fortnight after the same correspondent had sent word to Wallace that the Austrian Government was worried about the improved relations between London and St. Petersburg. "The best part of their foreign policy has been based on the long-standing enmity between England and Russia, and now that there are some signs of a change for the better the Austrians are not at their ease." The Prince of Wales's visit to Czar Alexander in December was welcomed by The Times in an article on December 12. Wallace considered the omens to be favourable. He was not blind to the simultaneous rapprochement of France and Russia. The relations of these Powers had, indeed, changed very considerably. Nor did The Times object; but not much was known of the extent of Franco-Russian cooperation. The December 12 article already quoted expressly said that a triple alliance on the one hand and a Franco-Russian understanding on the other could pave the way for a larger agreement. That France and Russia were entering into relations of some degree of intimacy was evident.2 On the other hand it was obvious that Great Britain and France had a long way to go to see their most acute colonial differences overcome. In March 1895 Grey, naturally with the complete approval of The Times, made his announcement warning the French to keep out of the Nile Valley. This was necessary. But if so, it was also necessary to bear in mind Italy and the interest of the Triple Alliance. Italy was still thought to be a weak member of the Alliance while regular editorial reference needed still to be made to the value of good Anglo-Italian relations and the importance to Great Britain of equilibrium in the Mediterranean. The Times had no sympathy with the doctrine, occasionally met with, that Great Britain should abandon the Mediterranean. On the contrary: "If we are not strong enough to hold our own in the Mediterranean our Empire is even now in jeopardy. If we are strong enough we are bound, by every consideration of national honour and repute, of commercial security and prosperity, of sound and proved strategy, of rational policy

<sup>1</sup> Lavino to Wallace, December 1, 1894. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> How much and how little even the best-informed observers knew of secret diplomacy is proved by Wallace's letter congratulating Blowitz "on the fulfilment of your prophecy about the Franco-Russian alliance being signed—or at least publicly proclaimed—during Faure's visit to St. Petersburg. This is quite in harmony with the conviction I have long held—founded on information from good sources—that down to the visit of Prince Lobanof to Contrexéville (1895) the entente had never been put into a formal shape. Whether it was put in black and white at that time I do not know because my best source of information closed shortly before that time, but I have always had the impression that during those interviews between Lobanof and Hanotaux some big step was taken towards regularising the informal entente." August 29, 1897. (W. 3/943.) The Military Convention was in fact signed on December 27, 1893.

#### HOSTILE EUROPE

and of judicious economy of force, never to abandon our position there so long as our Empire lasts." (March 29, 1895.)

A stronger statement than that just quoted can hardly be found in The Times. Yet, simultaneously, what had been generally regarded as the complement to this view of the necessity of British power over the Mediterranean, i.e., British cooperation with Italy and Austria-Hungary, was given no support. Wallace's final reckoning of Italy's effective power was that her contribution was too slight to justify the inconveniences attached to the connexion. She was a second-class Power handicapped by the over-great burden of armaments assumed in the vain ambition of ranking as a great Power, in partnership with Germany and Austria. Secondly, The Times believed that Austria-Hungary could not be depended upon by Britain. As a consequence, the conclusion that the Triplice, Germany included, was weak as an Alliance, was forced to the forefront of Wallace's mind. The tenor of the reports he was receiving from the correspondents of the paper confirmed these estimates. At this time Vienna was the most important diplomatic centre in Europe. The capital of Austria, as Germany's most powerful ally, which was in singularly close diplomatic relations with Italy, the Balkan Powers and with Britain, provided the most authentic, complete and rapid intelligence. Lavino, the correspondent, had access to much information and brought to bear upon it a political judgment which Wallace rated very highly. In his reports three things constantly recur. On the internal condition of the régime, Lavino judged that "all that is going on at present only tends to confirm the opinion which I have frequently expressed to you that the Dual Monarchy is rapidly drifting towards disintegration. The chief responsibility rests with the arrogant and short-sighted Austrian aristocracy, with whom the Emperor entirely sympathizes. In reality his grievance against the present Hungarian Ministry is its bourgeois character." Secondly, regarding the cohesion of the Triple Alliance, Lavino thought that Austria disliked the connexion with Italy. "The one thing Austria dreads above all others is being left en tête-à-tête with Germany." He added: "I wish I knew a little more about the reported Anglo-Russian rapprochement. It seems to me a consummation devoutly to be wished for its own sake." He even thought it could perhaps be followed by a reconciliation with France, thus meeting the colonial aggression of Germany, but remaining independent of Austria-Hungary, because "in my opinion the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Lavino to Wallace, Vienna, November 24, 1894. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

#### LAVINO ON THE DOOM OF THE HABSBURGS

Habsburg dynasty is doomed." Lavino had his doubts about Anglo-Austrian relations. It is not certain that he was aware, as Wallace probably was, of Rosebery's rejection in June, 1894, of Austrian advances; but in any case, he would hardly have regarded it as wise to take the advances seriously. "Monson [British Ambassador in Vienna] asked me," he wrote in February, 1895, "if I could explain why a portion of the Vienna Press had assumed such a hostile tone towards England. . . . My own opinion is that Kálnoky has never been quite as friendly to us as our own Foreign Office has been made to believe. . . . The longer Monson is here the more Austrian he gets, and I think he would look upon any suspicion of Kálnoky as next door to a crime. It is not admiration—it is the infatuation of a man of unsound judgment."

As to Italy herself, the paper's information, though extensive, was hardly quite as reliable. In his opinion, the Rome Correspondent, William Stillman, an American by nationality, was capable and completely honest, but he did not always exercise the coolest judgment. An excitable temperament combined with bad health rendered his correspondence from time to time emotional and irregular. Furthermore, intrigue habitually played such a part in Italian diplomacy that the correspondent was inevitably drawn into participation. Journalistically, the Rome agency of *The Times* was not in the front rank; but as the paper's representative in the capital of the country which was the pivot, strong or otherwise, of the Triple Alliance, and more, of the Anglo-Triplice relations, was only slightly less important in those days than Berlin.

Stillman's personal conviction was that the well-being of the Continent of Europe and of the British Empire depended upon England's close collaboration with the Triple Alliance. Of the two strong parties in Italian diplomacy, one was eager to secure an Anglo-Italian alliance and prepared for that reason to hold to the Triple Alliance; the other was desirous of coming to terms with Russia and France. The difference of outlook was of long standing, as Stillman knew from his possession of secret information confirming it. In 1893 Crispi, returning to power with Baron Blanc as Foreign Minister, announced his policy. He would uphold the Triple Alliance while seeking an understanding with Britain, in opposition to their predecessor Rudini, who inclined towards Russia and France. One of Blanc's obstacles was Tornielli, the Italian Ambassador in London, who was Russophile and therefore untrustworthy from Blanc's point of view. Other

Lavino to Wallace, Vienna, December 9, 1894. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)
 Lavino to Wallace, February 16, 1895. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

#### HOSTILE EUROPE

diplomats-and the supply was limited-were tarred with the same brush. Crispi's diplomatic machine, therefore, worked equivocally. In consequence, the correspondent of The Times had a difficult part to play.

In addition, Stillman believed Italian politicians, with few exceptions, to be untrustworthy. Crispi, he thought, was wellintentioned up to a point, though surrounded by rascals; Blanc he judged to be entirely honest. The Foreign Minister in fact was quite as capable as the correspondent's bête-noire, Rudini, of deliberate attempts to mislead him. Stillman had more than once been deceived by the "revelations of Rudini at the beginning of 1894 when he was in office."1

The honest Blanc now revealed to Stillman how the untrustworthy Tornielli had caused the 1878 negotiations with Great Britain to be dropped; how the crafty Mancini had occupied Massowah by secret agreement with France in 18852; how the cunning Rudini had then played a double game; but how he, the honest Blanc, was going to deal honourably with both the Central Powers and with England. Stillman naturally thought that the interests of peace and of Great Britain demanded the pillorying of this "traitor policy." Blanc's motive, naturally, was to destroy Rudini and to increase faith in Crispi's policy. But he had to be careful. "Blanc is so close and so apprehensive of our relations getting known, that he asks me to come to see him at his house by a private way with an arranged signal and will never in the presence even of his confidential subordinates let it be known that we talk on certain topics . . . Crispi is like the grave."3

The immediate object Blanc (and Crispi) had in view quickly became apparent: it was Mancini's old idea of using Anglo-Italian cooperation in the Red Sea and the Sudan as a basis for a more extensive understanding.<sup>4</sup> After referring to Dervish

<sup>2</sup> This was untrue, for the occupation was in fact the result of a secret agreement with Great Britain, but Blanc probably believed it to be true, for he told the same story to Sir Charles Dilke.

<sup>1</sup> A mysterious meeting had been arranged with De Giers, the Russian Chancellor, at Monza. So much was known, but what actually occurred at the meeting remains a mystery to this day. Bismarck's organ, the Hamburger Nachrichten, at the time declared that Italy had concluded a Reinsurance Treaty behind the backs of her allies, in the manner of Bismarck's own treaty of 1887. This account was confirmed by Stillman, who also described how Rudinl had also made new arrangements with France. If the Italian army, Rudini undertook, were mobilized according to the Triple Alliance in support of the Central Powers, it would be rendered ineffectual. Three years earlier, Rudini's renewal of the Triple Alliance had been accounted unsatisfactory by certain Italian

<sup>3</sup> Stillman to Wallace, June 7, 1895.

4 Cf. G.P. VIII, 362; Dugdale II, 158. A note by Blanc (c. April, 1894) "La prise de Kassala serait de peu d'importance politique, si ce n'était qu'un territoire annexe à la Colonie Erythréenne. Le grand advantage pour l'Italie est de devenir co-occupante de territoires Egyptiens avec les Anglais, en sorte qu'une dislocation de troupes entre Kassala, Wadi Halfa et le Caire est une affaire entre les Etat-Majors des deux pays. Ce serait une base d'alliance anglo-italienne et de garantie commune de la Mediterranée.

#### COMPLEXITIES OF ITALIAN DIPLOMACY

movements, Stillman observed: "There is within the Cabinet a tendency to make this the occasion of a return to an understanding with England on the basis of a common action towards Kassala and Suakim under the Egyptian flag. . . . This would restore the project of a joint action for the maintenance of the English authority over Egypt, which was rejected by Mancini.<sup>1</sup> I do not know how far the idea will prevail, but it is started."<sup>2</sup> This scheme proved abortive, but the Italians extracted from the British Government a reluctant acquiescence in their advance to the town of Kassala, although the place commanded an approach to Khartoum.

Later Crispi entered upon a forward policy in East Africa, and here again cooperation with Great Britain was desired. Naturally he was encouraged by the Germans. They were very discontented, alarmed even, with the growing coolness between London and Rome, and ardently wished to shepherd the two Powers into an African collaboration. It would be one step, it was hoped, of a move that would ultimately bring Britain into the German system of alliances. In Berlin, the dangers which arose from British indifference to Italian difficulties were pointed out to Chirol; in Rome, Bülow had been cultivating Stillman, who entertained a certain suspicion of his advances. "I have added to my list of (more or less) confidential relations, that with the new German Ambassador, who has given me an unexpectedly friendly and colleague-like reception, for which I am in debt, I suppose, to Blanc's warm recommendations . . . I am not likely to forget that he is a diplomat and that his confidences are likely to be the means to an end."3 It did not at all surprise Wallace or Chirol that Bülow should have discussed with Stillman ways to draw England and Germany closer together.4

At the time Chirol left Berlin for Egypt and the East at the end of 1894, the Germans were planning to draw the British and Italians together in the Sudan. Chirol, according to Marschall, had spoken in favour of some such arrangement and Hohenlohe ordered Bülow to

inform Baron Blanc very confidentially that the new Times Correspondent in Cairo, Mr. Chirol, formerly a diplomat, is a very important personage. He was here of late years, and on his departure expressed his firm intention of helping on the Anglo-Italian intimacy to the best of his ability. His influence in London is strong enough to neutralize

The refusal to cooperate with Great Britain in the occupation of Egypt was in 1882.
 Stillman to Wallace, February 15, 1894. Negotiations for joint Italo-Egyptian action against the Dervishes were opened, but led to nothing.
 Stillman to Wallace, April 3, 1894.

<sup>4</sup> G.P. VIII, pp. 474-5.

#### HOSTILE EUROPE

in certain definite cases even that of Lord Cromer. A moment may arise when this may be important, for Lord Cromer, who considers Egypt's financial interests before everything else, is opposed on principle to any policy involving military action.

The Italian Representative in Egypt will do well to place himself on a footing of mutual confidence with Mr. Chirol, whose tact and discretion may be reckoned on with certainty.<sup>1</sup>

Blanc undertook to follow the German advice.<sup>2</sup> The attempts of Signor Pansa, the Italian agent in Egypt, to enter upon intimate terms with Chirol do not appear to have been happy if we may judge from the tone in which the latter wrote on being interrupted by the Italian in the act of writing a dispatch to the Manager of The Times. "Pansa (the Italian agent) came in at this point, and bemoaned during two mortal hours the inactivity of England in the Sudan, and so it is post-time, or at least dinnertime, and I must break off abruptly."3 Chirol, in fact, required little stimulus to advocate a forward policy in the Sudan; he wrote from Egypt letters for publication and among them was one "which I expect, if you publish it, Lord C[romer] will not read with more satisfaction than the one on the Legislative Council. But I don't see how the issue can be much longer postponed and it is no good shirking it." Attempts were also made in London to interest The Times in the African adventure,5 but hervorragende Persönlichkeit as Chirol was, in 1895, he did not imagine himself powerful enough to set in motion a Sudanese campaign, with or without the support of Italy.

At this time, there was much uneasiness in the office at the aggressive Italian policy. Later in the year the Italian endeavour somewhat changed its direction. First, an attempt, not without equivocation, was made to convince *The Times* that advances towards Abyssinia were necessary for defensive reasons. General Baratieri returned to Rome in the summer to discuss with Crispi, as it is generally believed now, an offensive, while he simultaneously convinced Stillman that he would not go "into adventures in Africa." Wallace, at home, was more sceptical.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Hohenlohe to Bülow, January 3, 1895. (Dugdale II, 160; G.P. VIII, 375.) Marschall in reiterating the advice on January 24 (ibid., II, 162; VIII, 386) recommended that Chirol "should not be alarmed by too much insistence."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bülow to F.O., Rome, January 4, 1895. (G.P. VIII, 387.)

<sup>3</sup> Chirol to Bell, Cairo, January 14, 1895. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Chirol to Bell, Cairo, February 4, 1895.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Silvestrelli, Italian Chargé d'Affaires in London, sent Wallace some exclusive war news, January 16, 1895. (P.H.S. Miscellaneous.) Blanc sent him official publications. Wallace to Blanc, September 3, 1895. (F. 3/123.)

<sup>6</sup> Stillman to Wallace, July 31, 1895; Wallace to Stillman, July 28, 1895, (F. 3/77.)

## ITALY'S AGGRESSIVE COLONIAL POLICY

Secondly, there was Zeila. This Red Sea port was important to Italy strategically because it was the gateway into Harrar, and possession of it would enable them to menace the Abyssinian rear. The port, however, was in British hands, and Her Majesty's Government were bound by treaty with France to respect its independence. In consequence the Italian request for the use, lease, or cession, or anything like the equivalents, of Zeila was highly troublesome. The Italian importunity seriously offended Salisbury, who was back in office from June, 1895, in succession to Rosebery. His unwillingness to assist Italy in her difficulties was a bitter blow to the Anglophile party in Italy and to the framers of policy in Germany. Stillman valiantly argued the Italian pro-British case: "If the English and Italian Governments can agree on the situation there [Zeila], the bellicose intentions of Menelek will subside and there will be no trouble with him. What Blanc desires is a condominium at Kassala and Zeila—declaration of the common interest of England and Italy which he considers of such moral weight to determine all questions at present." The British undertaking with France was to go hang.

The Times thus had plenty of evidence that Italy, with Germany in the background, understood closer relations with England to bear a sense hostile to France. He was aware too of the incipient Italo-Russian conflict over Abyssinia.<sup>2</sup> A leading article of August 9, 1895, refused to take a serious view of the Abyssinian ambitions of Russia; but, on the other hand, it admitted that the aggressive colonial policy of Italy, in particular her demands at Zeila and her Near Eastern ambitions, had made a wholly unfavourable impression. "Entre nous," Wallace wrote to Lavino, "our dear friends the Italians are rather troublesome. They think that putting their finger in every pie constitutes them a great nation and that friendly relations justify them in the request for the cession of a port."3 Wallace did not ignore the far more significant fact that Germany was encouraging Italy to go forward in Africa; she was backing her demands at Zeila,4 and she was making mischief in the Near East. The Armenian trouble was unsolved, and it seemed to Wallace that Germany wished to use it to divide Great Britain and Russia. Stillman's information

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Stillman to Wallace, August 22, 1895,

<sup>2&</sup>quot; Keep your eye, too, on the relations between Italy and Russia as modified by the reception of the Abyssinian mission at St. Petersburg": Wallace to Stillman, July 28, 1895. (F. 3/77.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Wallace to Lavino, December 19, 1895. (F. 3/272.)

<sup>4&</sup>quot; It amuses me to hear the idea of the Germans that England ought really to grant that 'little service to Italy.' I wonder what they would say if anyone asked them to cede a port as a little friendly service?" wrote Wallace to Lavino (see note 3).

#### HOSTILE EUROPE

was that Blanc had affirmed that he had "the word of honour of H.I.G.M. [the German Emperor] that we may go as far as we like in the support of Austria and England and he will support us to the end. It is direct, explicit, and not even through an official circumlocution—the ruler himself." Again: "All she [Germany] wants from England is that your Government should take up a definite, clearly shown line of conduct." At the same time Wallace was aware that Germany was restraining Austria and was herself making up to Russia.

Hence there were reasons and to spare to convince Wallace that the Triple Alliance was a weak association; reasons also to make him believe it was an untrustworthy one. It seemed, too, that this weakness was secretly realized by the Triplice Powers themselves. Notwithstanding, Germany, Italy, and Austria were continually offering their support to Great Britain as against France and continually expecting for it a price that, in relation to the weakness of the Triple Alliance, was far too high. Still, it could not be denied that France was obstructive. For ten years or more its nationals and its Government had been provoking trouble.

Egypt had long been the primary source of friction. There was, too, persistent French opposition to Britain over Newfoundland, the New Hebrides, the Somali Coast, and almost everywhere else. In 1889 Bismarck felt encouraged to propose an alliance with Great Britain. This offer was declined for the traditional "isolationist" reason. Three years afterwards Britain refused the demand of the French Government for the date of evacuation of Egypt. France thereupon increased everywhere her opposition to Britain. The view was held in London that as things stood in 1895 the British Navy was equal to any Anglo-French emergency that could be foreseen. No question of a Continental alliance "arose." Politicians might encourage Germany and the Triple Alliance to isolate France but no Conservative or Liberal Government would join a Continental alliance in order to make such isolation effective. Wallace, who would allow no Power to use a second Power's antagonism to British interests as a pretext to extort for itself colonial or other concessions, placed his confidence in British strength. At the end of 1895 all Britain was content with the growing prospect of Russian and possibly French accords; with, over all, an unchallengeable Navy behind her to maintain the policy of a free hand towards the problems of Europe; and, despite French

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Stillman to Wallace, November 30, 1895. It is difficult to reconcile Blanc's statement with Hohenlohe's letter to the Emperor, November 22, 1895, and the Emperor's comments. (G.P. X, 112, Dugdale II, 354-6.)

<sup>2</sup> Stillman to Wallace, December 2, 1895.

## THE KAISER'S TELEGRAM TO KRUGER

opposition, firm resolution towards those of Egypt, the Congo, and, despite German opposition, towards those of the Transvaal. The international situation hardly yet justified Moberly Bell's and Flora Shaw's anxiety at the time of Jameson's "flotation." Their concern, however, was prophetically correct.

It soon became only too clear that the opposition of the Germans towards British expansion in South Africa had increased during the year. When Chirol returned to Berlin in November, 1895,1 he found that the atmosphere there was noticeably different from what it had been eleven months earlier. A month later he noticed the "cross-grained irritability" of "those who are at bottom least unfriendly to us." Notwithstanding, he still thought that the sentiment dominating the Emperor was that of friendliness to England, "though it may be more intermittent and uncertain than it was two or three years ago." German good will had been evident in the Venezuelan trouble both in the unofficial Press and in the official action of Holstein, who gave Chirol news for unofficial communication to the British Government, the substance of which was the useful tip that the Venezuelan President was open to bribery.2 The information was given, Holstein said, because "it would not be consistent with the sincerity of our friendliness to withhold" it. The insinuation that there existed considerations that divided the two English-speaking nations may here be observed. It later became an article of faith with certain highly placed Wilhelmstrasse officials.

At the end of the year the Berlin sky was showing, if anything, a slight tendency to clear, but when Jameson went into the Transvaal, on the night of December 29-30, German popular feeling immediately and passionately ranged itself on the side of the Boers. Salisbury's assurance of the Government's disapproval relieved the strain, as Chirol reported, but the mischief had been done. Chirol's messages were definite enough. "I am not speaking without authority when I state that as far as Germanv is concerned the issue of this question may determine her whole policy towards England." So read the Berlin message to The Times on January 3, 1896.

On the same day there was dispatched a telegram from the Kaiser to Kruger.<sup>3</sup> It was published to the world on January 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chirol had been to the Middle and Far East. See Chapter VII, ante.

<sup>2</sup> Chirol to Wallace, December 20 and 26, 1895; with copy of memorandum prepared for Lascelles, December 24. (C.U.L. Wallace Papers.)

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter VIII. When Die Grosse Politik was published it became known that at the Wilhelmstrasse on the day of dispatch, the telegram was the subject of a conference at the Chancellor's office between the Kaiser, Hohenlohe, Marschall, Admiral von Hollmann and other naval officials. Holstein and Kayser remained in the ante-room. Thus Holstein's responsibility was strictly limited. (G.P. XI, 31.)

Wallace's first reading of the telegram inclined him to a mild interpretation. He suggested that all the headstrong young Kaiser intended was a personal statement, as that, "I am glad you did not feel any necessity to apply to outsiders; for if you had you would have placed me in a very difficult position, &c.. &c." But this view of the telegram did not stand. Chirol's next telegram "knocked the bottom out of that charitable interpretation and we had to regard it as an intentionally unfriendly act." Chirol's statement was that the Kaiser's telegram was no mere private expression of feeling. It was sent after conference with his Ministers, and he named Marschall, Hohenlohe and Hollmann (Admiralty) as being present with the Kaiser. It was, in fact, a State Document conveying an unqualified recognition of the independence of the South African Republic. Chirol reported at the same time that he believed Marschall was advising the Transvaal through Leyds to take steps to denounce the Convention of 1884 with Great Britain. The Times printed Chirol's message under the headlines THE TRANSVAAL CRISIS/SERIOUS ACTION OF THE GERMAN EMPEROR. The leading article on the affair laid stress on the gravity and responsibility attaching to such a piece of "diplomatic chauvinism" and announced Great Britain's firm determination to maintain her rights. The article was couched in restrained language, for Wallace characteristically refused to take an extreme view. "I could not . . . go so far as to consider it an 'insult' as most people persist in calling it; at the same time it is just as well that H.M. should know how his démarche is regarded in England."1

If firm language was called for, so also was cool judgment. Wallace always studied to see both sides of any question. From the first it was out of the question for him to entertain any sympathy with Dr. Jameson. But, as the reader of an earlier chapter of this work will appreciate, other powers in Printing House Square had committed themselves to a very different policy. Of Bell's activities, Wallace, like Buckle, apparently knew nothing. Chirol, in a private letter to Wallace on Saturday, January 4, explained some of the worst aspects in the situation as he saw it. The arrival in Berlin of van Blokland, official representative of the Transvaal in Europe, seemed to indicate that some sort of political convention between the Republic and Germany was to be negotiated, since otherwise the presence of Dr. Leyds, the unofficial representative in Berlin, would have sufficed. The correspondent thought that the Germans harboured an intention to contrive a German substitute for the existing British ascendancy

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wallace to Chiro., January 6, 1896. (F. 3/289.)

## REACTIONS TO THE TELEGRAM

in South Africa. This would be a very serious thing to attempt, whether it succeeded or not. "As you know I have always advocated and, as far as I possibly could, assisted a policy of friendship towards Germany. I have thought that most of our misunderstandings have arisen from our inability to focus things in the same light as the Germans. I have sought to make every allowance for the difficult position in which German statesmen have been placed by the exigencies of internal politics. But in this question I can see nothing but a desire not only to thwart our so-called pretensions in South Africa but to make political capital out of existing complications at our expense and to humiliate us."

In Chirol's telegraphic messages, and the leading articles based upon them, a studied moderation of phrase was combined with a substantially unvielding spirit. Official relations, commented Chirol on the 5th, were of an entirely correct character and the tone of the semi-official Press was showing signs of improvement. To Wallace, he excused himself for going so far in the moderate direction as to disguise the real dangers of the situation as a whole. The question of British suzerainty over the Republic had not hitherto caused difficulties with Germany and whether it did now entirely depended upon the German Government. Any hypothetical plan of theirs (it was not then known that actually it had been planned to make a landing) to send German marines to Pretoria or Lorenzo Marques via Delagoa Bay was unnecessary after Jameson's defeat. A leading article in The Times of the 6th described German intervention as "academic" and added that it would not influence British policy in South Africa.

The same article also gave the warning, significant in view of Wallace's long-cherished desire for an understanding with Germany's Eastern neighbour, that, if Great Britain were to abandon isolation, her "rapprochement would not be with Germany, but with the Powers which she, perhaps, regards not wholly without apprehension." Next day a hint was thrown out in reply to the American President and the German Emperor: "To fight, if it be unavoidable, for these things [British commerce and colonies] is not only an obligation of honour, but a dictate of necessity. Fighting will probably not be needed, if we show that we are strong, well prepared, and thoroughly united." In the same issue Chirol's telegram from Berlin dated January 6 suggested that German protestations against the British charge of unfriendliness could soon be judged by the

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Wallace, January 4, 1896, (C.U.L. Wallace Papers.)

attitude adopted towards the international status quo of the South African Republic. Chirol's final interpretation of the Kaiser's telegram was that

it was a bid for popularity at home, which, in the present internal situation, was eminently desirable, and it was a warning to England that she could only find salvation in closer contact with Germany and her allies.

On January 7, 1896, the day upon which the above appeared, Hatzfeldt, the German Ambassador in London, reported to his chief in Berlin that "The very general and deep bitterness in the Press against us seems to be less marked to-day. I privately advised Lord Salisbury quietly to recommend the newspapers to abstain from further personal attacks on his Majesty, and he promised heartily to do this."

At this moment *The Times*, which had hitherto pursued in many respects a moderate line in moderate spirit, began to adopt a much stronger tone. The several reasons for the change are to be found in Chirol's private correspondence with Wallace:

To-day [he wrote on January 7] I have for the first time, I must admit, fully realized how serious the situation is, for only to-day I have been compelled to suspect that Germany's action in this matter has not been shaped on the spur of the moment, but has been prepared de longue main. There is no doubt whatever in my mind that the determination to land troops in Delagoa Bay and march them into the Transvaal actually existed and was within an ace of being carried out. . . . I learn to-day from a fairly reliable source that Germany has been for some time past negotiating with Portugal to secure her consent to the landing of German troops<sup>2</sup> in the event of her possessions or the status quo in South Africa being threatened by England.

Moreover, proceeded the correspondent:

I have had very strong evidence to-day that Germany is really trying to defeat any understanding between Kruger and Sir Hercules Robinson [High Commissioner for Cape Colony] and wants to see things pushed to extremities out there, whilst here the question of our suzerainty has been raised in a form which may not absolutely be construed as a *mise en demeure*, but must make it very difficult for H.M.G. to avoid taking up a definite position towards it.<sup>3</sup>

The substance of what Chirol had to say about the Portuguese negotiations appeared under the headline "Grave attitude of Germany" in *The Times* of January 8. And the leading article now took a completely new view of the question. It confirmed

3 Chirol to Wallace, January 7, 1896. (C.U.L. Wallace Papers.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Hatzfeldt to the Foreign Office, January 7, 1896. (Dugdale II, 394; G.P. XI, 40.)

<sup>2</sup> Marschall's instruction to Hatzfeldt on January 2 was that no more than fifty men were in question. (Dugdale II, 382; G.P. XI, 25.)

## INNER SIGNIFICANCE OF THE KRUGER TELEGRAM

the view that German interference in the Transvaal was not the result of sudden indignation at the action of Dr. Jameson but, on the contrary, had been meditated, discussed, and presumably concerted with the Boers. "The German Emperor's indignation at Dr. Jameson's raid, which struck many shrewd observers as considerably overdone, must accordingly be regarded in the light of diplomatic histrionics." These revelations were significant in the highest degree. The British public, after the first emotional reaction, had come to appreciate the political fact that there was "something" behind the Kruger telegram and proceeded to suspect that there must also have been "something" behind the Jameson Raid which justified it. Despite Salisbury's repudiation, Jameson was likely to become a hero in Britain and a demon in Germany. When Marschall, on being asked, confirmed to Chirol that the Kruger telegram was a Staatsaktion, all doubts vanished. A calmly matured policy of hostility against England was, or seemed to be, responsible. Wallace now wrote privately of a preference for "the alternative of war"; his tone was in a very different key from that of the leading article of the 7th, quoted above, in which England's readiness to fight was little more than a general warning that England was not a nation of shopkeepers. On the day after the dispatch on Friday of the Kaiser's telegram, Holstein told Chirol that so long as England showed so little consideration for the interests of Germany and her allies in other parts of the world, Germany could not be expected to show much tenderness for the interests of England. The conduct of Britain, he proceeded, and the language held on more than one occasion by Lord Salisbury, was driving Germany to reconsider her whole position towards England, and that perhaps sooner, rather than later, the opportunity would be taken to bring Britain to her bearings. Holstein abstained from saying outright that Britain needed the Triple Alliance. It was not until April and May, i.e., four to five months later, that Marschall admitted in later discussions with Wallace, that among the primary motives which led the German Foreign Office to agree with the sending of a suitable telegram was that of testing the attitude, which it was hoped would favour intervention, of other European Powers.1

The reason for the German decision to withhold support from the Boers lay in the French indisposition to respond to Marschall's

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bülow's Reichstag Speech on December 12, 1900: "I am guilty of no diplomatic indiscretion when I say that this telegram had at any rate the good effect, by virtue of the reception it met with not only in Germany but outside Germany. Its reception had the merit of making the situation so far clear to us that there was obviated all possibility of doubt that in the event of a conflict with England in Africa, we should have had to rely solely upon our own strength." See also Būlow's Reden. (Leipzig, 1903.

invitation to join. The French were told that if they allied themselves with Germany, other Powers would associate themselves. The Powers were not named; Russia may not have been considered but Portugal could hardly have been outside the German calculations. Unfortunately for this scheme France was told that such an arrangement between the Powers would require to be limited to the specific purpose in view and not at present extend to the Eastern, Egyptian or Mediterranean questions. This would utterly antagonize Britain and embroil her with Italy but do nothing more for France. Thus Marschall exposed Germany's only motive, which was to redress the weakness of the Triple Alliance by pressing Britain into it. The French would naturally refuse to take part on such terms; but, before they expressed themselves on the point, strong language towards Britain continued to be held in Berlin.<sup>1</sup>

"It would be wise for England to avoid complications by coming to terms with Kruger," Holstein warned Chirol on January 7. "I can assure you," he said, "whether you believe me or not, that if you compel him to appeal to us, we shall not be isolated. There are things which I cannot discuss with you at present because I should have to disclose matters which I cannot disclose, and you may think that because I make no answer to you at present I have none to make. But I can and do assure you again and again, that England is running the gravest danger."2 Chirol replied that from what he understood in other quarters the apprehensions which he and Marschall had conveyed to him, were lacking in confirmation. He had no doubt, he said, that Germany had reluctantly contemplated various contingencies. Placing himself under the protection of the friendly frankness which had hitherto prevailed between himself and the Germans. Chirol confessed to a feeling that Marschall's and Holstein's warnings,3 conveyed as they were, not only for his personal guidance but with the request that he would convey them to quarters (i.e., Lascelles and Salisbury) which they could not very well reach through the ordinary official channels, might seem to carry with them a threatening undertone.

All this, Chirol reflected, formed part of a system "no doubt, quite unconsciously framed," capable of exercising upon British policy indirect pressure which the German Government felt it had neither the right nor the power to apply directly. Chirol emphasized to Holstein that the way to tranquillize public feeling

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See *The Times*, April 28 and June 30, 1897. <sup>2</sup> Chirol to Wallace, January 11, 1896. (C.U.L.)

<sup>3</sup> See Chirol's résumé at p. 271.

### THREATENED GERMAN LANDING

on both sides would be to give good advice to Kruger.1 Meanwhile the British reaction to German moves was so vigorous that the German Government, disappointed in the French and Russian refusal to act with them, now discovered that they had gone too far and that it would pay them to minimize the whole affair. They were perturbed lest light should be focused on discussions preceding the telegram; perturbed again by discussions concerning the Delagoa Bay plan and the revelation of Portugal's action towards it. This last incident assumed crucial importance in the relations of the Wilhelmstrasse and The Times correspondent, although it was a small matter in comparison with the Kaiser's telegram. Marschall had explained to Chirol, on Sunday, January 5, that the telegram meant a "warning to England" that Germany would not tolerate any extension of British influence in South Africa. Marschall added that, although the necessity for such a measure had, fortunately, vanished, the British Government would do well to recollect in its future dealings with President Kruger that Germany, having now declared herself, would stand behind the Boers. When interrogated by Chirol the Foreign Secretary gave him to understand that the German request for the use of Delagoa Bay had not been refused at Lisbon; and on Wednesday, January 8, Chirol was put in a position to send the following official disclaimer:

It is denied that any understanding was arrived at with Portugal before the recent occurrences in the Transvaal. After the news of Dr. Jameson's invasion of the Transvaal territory the German Foreign Office had, it is stated, only time to telegraph to Lisbon an explanation of the scope and purpose of its intended intervention, and before there had been time for the Portuguese Government to reply the necessity for an intervention had already passed away owing to Dr. Jameson's defeat.

Marschall further explained to Chirol that the proposed landing was purely of a police character.

Wallace at once made confidential inquiries as to Portugal's reply and secured information in time to telegraph a message to Chirol late on Wednesday afternoon. He could not publicly use this information, and hence nothing on the subject was published in *The Times* until a telegram was received from A. W. Paterson, the Lisbon Correspondent. On Friday the following appeared as from "OUR CORRESPONDENT," with the dateline "Lisbon, January 9":

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Wallace, January 11, 1896. (C.U.L.)

I understand from a trustworthy source that the request which the German Government made to the Portuguese Government to land troops at Lorenzo Marques, to be transported by rail to the Transvaal frontier, was politely refused. . . .

The effect of Wallace's private telegram of Wednesday upon Chirol was instantaneous; he sat down on the same evening and scribbled to Wallace:

Just a line by special messenger who is going to London tonight. Tel. just received respg. refusal of Port. Govt. to allow German troops to pass is most interesting and important. For if it is true this is a case in which Marschall has *lied* to me and what is much more important to L[ascelles, the British Ambassador]. I ought not perhaps to say an actual, but an implied lie, for we have just been comparing notes and the only difference is that he read to L. the tels. sent from Berlin to Lisbon, and to me he only gave the substance; but on both our minds he left the impression that Portugal had not refused, and could not have refused a permission 'asked for on humanitarian grounds.'

Altogether I am getting rather suspicious about the straightforwardness of the F.O. here in all this question. The most charitable construction is that they have got themselves into a tighter place than they anticipated, and don't know how to get out of it. . . . 1

Chirol's charity did not long remain equal to the demands which the situation made upon it. He could not rid himself of the feeling that the account Marschall gave of the Portuguese action was deliberately calculated to mislead Lascelles and himself. The Portuguese Government, of course, had no desire to offend Germany; and, if they had been embarrassed by Germany's request, they were far more worried by the inquiries of *The Times*. That their attitude was understood in the office is plain from Wallace's letter to Paterson:

I am not at all surprised that the Portuguese Govt. should have felt annoyed at your having sent that telegram because it excited some indignation at Berlin, and Portugal has naturally no wish to excite wrath in that quarter. As your telegram was allowed by the Censor to get through I assumed that the Portuguese Govt. had no objection to the fact being known. If you happen to see M. de Soveral you may explain to him and say that I am very sorry if publication caused him any annoyance. Throughout the whole affair Portugal acted in the most correct and dignified manner without giving the Germans any just cause of complaint, and I had no difficulty in recognizing M. de Soveral's firm and dexterous hand.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Wallace, January 10, 1896. (F. 3/298.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Wallace to Paterson, January 22, 1896. (F. 3/315.)

# VAGUE PORTUGUESE REPLY TO GERMAN REQUEST

In the circumstances it would have been natural that Soveral should emphasize to Great Britain the firmness, and to Germany the conditional character, of the refusal. There is evidence that Soveral was slow to take the correct action. But act he did.1 The Germans were bound to look ridiculous when it became known that Portugal had categorically denied them permission to use Lorenzo Marques. To satisfy the home demand for the protection of German nationals in the Transvaal they had at length allowed it to be published that they would have sent marines, if necessary, to Pretoria. The Portuguese refusal imposed two alternatives: either to do nothing in any circumstances—which would be extremely humiliating; or to show a readiness to violate neutral territory—which would put them in the same position as Dr. Jameson. Naturally the Germans were highly embarrassed by Chirol's questions and by his publication of them in The Times. Marschall therefore made the most of the face-saving "humanitarian" clause in the Portuguese note. The word itself was not used by the Portuguese. As Wallace informed Chirol, "The Portuguese Government did refuse [passage] but to soften the blow they attached, I believe, a vague meaningless phrase to the effect that in the event of an urgent necessity for saving life they might do so and so."2

But Marschall's appeal to a "humanitarian" clause did not suffice to close the incident as far as Chirol was concerned. It was, as has already been noted, on Wednesday, January 8, that Chirol reported the authorized statement that the negotiations with Portugal were dropped when Jameson capitulated. The statement does not appear to have been true. The sequence of events was that on January 3, Derenthal, German Minister at Lisbon, reported that Portugal refused permission; while on the same day the news was known that Jameson had surrendered; on the 5th the German Government renewed the request to Portugal more insistently; Chirol reported on the 7th that he had been given to understand that the news of Jameson's defeat and surrender arrived only just in time to avert the dispatch of a detachment of German troops to Lorenzo Marques; on the same day the official Press stated that if their nationals had been in danger in Pretoria, German marines would have been landed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cf. Wallace to Chirol, February 25, 1896, "From Lisbon I learn that the British Minister was not altogether satisfied with the action of the Portuguese Government in the Delagoa Bay incident, and considered that Soveral showed much delay and hesitation. Soveral, I am told is afraid of Germany and especially of the German Emperor on personal grounds. I had sent him a delicate complimentary message through a private friend, and now I am told that he did not deserve it, because he merely did in a hesitating way what he was obliged to. I suspect there must be some friction between him and Sir H. Macdonald." (F. 3/333.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Wallace to Chirol, January 10, 1896. (F. 3/298.)

Chirol's unwelcome announcement, appearing in *The Times* on the 8th, put it in the form that Germany had not come to a prior understanding with Portugal for the passage of troops from Delagoa Bay to Pretoria. His authority was official. Yet he quoted the original announcement from the *North German Gazette*:

The intention of the German Government to defend the interests of its subjects in the South African Republic, by landing, if necessary, marines from the Seeadler, to be reinforced from the Condor in Delagoa Bay and marching them into the Transvaal will not fail to call forth throughout the Empire . . . feelings of legitimate pride. . . .

The new statement<sup>1</sup> given to Chirol late on the 8th said that, before there had been time for the Portuguese Government to reply, the necessity for intervention had already passed away owing to Jameson's defeat. In fact, it was only later in the course of that day that Marschall's anxieties were relieved by receiving from Derenthal the news that Portugal would probably grant permission supposing fresh occurrences should again endanger the lives and property of German subjects.<sup>2</sup> Of course Marschall made the most of this when he saw Chirol during the day, and did not think it necessary to reveal that this conditional permission was due to pressure. Thus what the German public continued to view as a police measure conditional upon necessity, Chirol (and the readers of *The Times*) saw as a determined seizure of an excuse to send troops to South Africa, that was frustrated only by the attitude of Portugal.

The incident is important as an illustration of the basis given for Chirol's suspicion of the German Government's motives and of the straightforwardness of its officials. Any correspondent's suspicion may occasionally be excessive; Chirol was a peculiarly sensitive man and not altogether unaccustomed to making emotional decisions. But in the instances of the Kruger telegram and the Delagoa Bay "landing" it can hardly be claimed that Chirol's suspicions were completely misplaced, or that his customary sense of diplomatic proportion had deserted him. It was inevitable that his sympathies after the surrender of Jameson should be wholeheartedly on the British side and he could not be expected to justify the German policy of forcing Britain into the Triple Alliance, pity their failure to create a European bloc against Britain, or assist them over their difficulties with the Portuguese. Nevertheless, Chirol's accusation of mendacity against Marschall seems a little extreme. Lascelles, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For the text refer to p. 263, ante. <sup>2</sup> Cf. Dugdale II, 379; G.P. XI 20, I, note.

# CHIROL'S RESENTMENT OF MARSCHALL'S METHODS

Ambassador, appears to have borne no ill-will on this score and looked upon it merely as an everyday equivocation. The explanation lies in the fact that Chirol had observed other indications of a challenging tone in Berlin.

The Embassy staff in Berlin were surprised at the warmth of Chirol's resentment. Cecil Spring Rice, Chirol's most intimate friend at the Embassy, gave the correspondent credit for being "the most ardent advocate of a good understanding with Germany and always has been so. He has also a great admiration for several members of the present administration. But he is rather a warmhearted man and takes things seriously. But now he thinks that the German Press has been encouraged for years to answer all our overtures with contempt and that advantage has been taken of the first difficulty to stab us in the back. Naturally he is in a rage and shows it. . . . Chirol believes that the next step of hostility will be to work through the Sultan or the Mussulman population of India. Chirol is still very sore and rather surprises us by his vehemence. I think it is the effect of his determined efforts to get the [German] Foreign Office to make some friendly statement towards England. Since he has been here, that has been his chief object. And the result is what you see. He believes in the existence of a determined hostility which takes a brutal and cowardly form. It's quite natural to be offended at the tone of the German Press; but then, read the article in the Standard of the 18th." "A friendly remark of some kind in The Times would cost nothing and go down very well indeed,"1 added Spring Rice in conclusion. It would have been no bad thing in the circumstances if Marschall or Holstein had made up their minds to make a conciliatory "remark" to Chirol. The policy of the Wilhelmstrasse was soon to prove that Chirol was right and the Embassy wrong.

The closure of the incidents of the Kaiser's telegram and the threatened dispatch of marines was finally due to the German Government's seeking to climb down without loss of dignity.<sup>2</sup> The German popular press continued to champion Kruger and Chirol's messages extracted for the guidance of readers of *The Times* the more unfriendly passages. Holstein and Chirol met

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Spring Rice to Villiers, January 17, 1896, in *The Letters and Friendships of Cecil Spring Rice* edited by S. Gwynn (London, 1929) I, 191-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The German Government itself seems from the first to have been in favour of moderation. As early as January 5, Marschall telegraphed to Herff at Pretoria that "There is general sympathy for the Transvaal, and she is expected to defend her rights, but not to issue a challenge, which is bound to lead to war." (Dugdale II, 379; G.P. XI, 19-20.) Chirol's fear, promptly denied in the official press, of a projected convention establishing German Protection for the Boers was based rather upon guesses at the Kaiser's intentions and not upon any statement made to him by Marschall or Holstein.

almost every day. Holstein had a special object in view. He had finished a Memorandum on December 30, 1895, which indicated to his superiors how a Continental bloc might be formed against England. The aim of this scheme was less to realize an anti-British alliance than, by frightening Great Britain into a sense of her dangerous isolation, to force upon her attention the value of the Triple Alliance. Doubtless this scheme lay behind Holstein's approval of the Kruger telegram. Its dispatch favoured such a policy, he thought. It was a policy that Bismarck had initiated and would have pressed forward. The present tactic was Holstein's. But, able as he was and educated in Bismarck's school, he could not play the game so consummately as the Iron Chancellor. In any case, Bismarck with his "Reinsurance Treaty" was in a far stronger position than his successors. Wallace. in the circumstances, was right in taking just the opposite course. If Germany thought of threatening to combine with France and Russia against England, she might find that England herself could much more easily settle her differences with those Powers. Holstein pegged away day after day trying to convince Chirol of the great danger in which England stood, but without success. It was on January 7 that he succeeded in persuading Chirol to communicate the "warning" to Lascelles who, as Holstein intended, forwarded it to Lord Salisbury. The following day Holstein had another long interview with Chirol in which he reiterated the "warning" more circumstantially. A record of this conversation was even transmitted to the German Ambassador in London:

I spoke to Chirol, *The Times* Correspondent here and a friend of the Ambassador's, as follows:

I wish earnestly that the present direct negotiations between the Transvaal and England may achieve their object. Otherwise the matter will go very much further. We Germans could not accept a solution which left us with nothing. It is already clear that Russia will not fail to make use of her one opportunity (Armenia) of exploiting Germany against England. France will be obliged to go with her, in spite of Alsace-Lorraine, because otherwise Germany would usurp France's place with Russia, and a German-Russian group would be a permanent menace to France, against which even the British Navy would be no protection.

Taking this into consideration I believe there will be a satisfactory solution.

The suspicions of a German seizure of Lorenzo Marques are an absurdity. We should thereby bring the French, who set much store by this port on account of Madagascar, on to the British side.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 262, ante.

# CHIROL'S RESENTMENT EXTENDS TO HOLSTEIN

Up to now British and even Conservative policy—the attempt at a flare-up on account of Armenia, the refusal over Samoa, the contemptuous treatment of the Italian proposal regarding Zeila—so long as it lasts, makes of England a useless political factor. It is very doubtful if the Transvaal experience will suffice to make England realize the necessity of maintaining connection with the Continent. Fresh doctrines and fresh personalities will, however, gradually pave the way to this realization.<sup>1</sup>

The policy of "kicking England into friendliness," though ostensibly given up when the incident of the telegram was closed. was not for that reason permanently ignored; Chirol did not forget it. When, in mid-January, as a direct result of the collapse of their highly unrealistic scheme of an anti-British bloc, the German Government adopted a more friendly tone towards Great Britain, he was hardly able to accept the assurance of its genuineness. "I think," he said to Wallace "England will have to keep a very sharp look-out on German diplomatic action for some time to come." Moreover, even had the new protestations of friendship been genuine, it only proved that the old warnings were baseless; and that he himself. at Holstein's suggestion, by personally pressing their gravity upon Lascelles and Salisbury had been hoodwinked. He had been made a tool of German policy and had been made to look personally ridiculous. He dwelt very strongly on this last point. "What I do feel is, that if one is to credit their present assurances of perfect friendliness, and their righteous airs of injured innocence, all their solemn warnings and agonized threats of impending evil to England were merely a comedy of intimidation in which I was cast for the part of an unofficial medium." Chirol had no means of knowing that Marschall had sanguine, if completely unjustified, hopes of making a bloc out of Russian and French anti-English sentiments. Accordingly, Chirol continued to feel that people who professed to reciprocate his friendship had betrayed him. "I shall not forget in a hurry that Holstein's impressive appeal imposed sufficiently on my good faith for me to induce Lascelles to telegraph privately to Lord Salisbury what he had said to me-which was, no doubt, his object."2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Holstein to Hatzfeldt, January 8, 1896. (Dugdale II, 395; G.P. XI, 41.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> If Chirol seems hypersensitive here, it should be borne in mind that the position in which the Germans placed him would have appealed to few former members of the staff of the Foreign Office and least of all to one then working on a newspaper. It only needs to be added that Chirol ever retained a strong sense of official discipline and that Lord Salisbury was not the Foreign Secretary to forget men who made mistakes. Chirol was the last man to wish to appear as a Foreign Office "failure."

It was in this mood that on January 10 Chirol had a long conversation at the Wilhelmstrasse and held forth to Holstein so roundly that he could only reply that "recent events had evidently affected my usual amiability of temper." However, although the Wilhelmstrasse, as Chirol observed to Wallace, "was furious with me for having raised the question of Portugal's attitude towards the landing of German troops in Delagoa Bay." it was not this but his maintenance of a generally critical attitude in face of the new German effort to make peace that now baffled Marschall and Holstein. Chirol did not believe that the policy had really changed, and hence his telegrams continued to illustrate a conception of German policy consistent with the incidents already described. The German Press also piled attacks on The Times on account of its connexion with the Chartered Company. Much was said on this aspect of the Jameson conspiracy. As to the connexion with Rhodes, Chirol was particularly scandalized to read The Times described in the Kölnische Zeitung as a "kept" journal of the Chartered Company.<sup>2</sup> Bell kept Chirol informed as to the progress of the Raid, and it was through the correspondent that the British Ambassador learnt the details. But Chirol did not believe that the authors of the attacks on The Times could have believed the allegation to be true; still less could he have imagined that it might contain a grain of verisimilitude. It is not known whether the Ambassador told Chirol how the Kaiser had told him that "The Jameson Raid was got up by three German Jews, who have also bought The Times."3 Chirol's mind, if not finally made up, was tending more strongly in the direction which he had already hinted at to the Germans. At last he gave clear expression on January 18, in a private letter he wrote to Wallace, to an opinion that, if known to the Wilhelmstrasse, would have served as a "warning" to Marschall and Holstein: "Though I say it who fain would not, it might be worth our while to come to some arrangement with France in reference to Egypt if she is willing to negotiate on any reasonable terms,"

In such a frame of mind, his messages naturally continued to be critical of German motives, and manoeuvres. The German Press retaliated in paragraphs attacking Chirol by name. On January 25 Marschall made a formal complaint to Lascelles regarding *The Times* correspondent. The correspondent there-

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Wallace, January 11, 1896. (C.U.L. Wallace Papers.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Chirol to Wallace, January 12, 1896. (C.U.L. Wallace Papers.)

<sup>3</sup> S. Gwynn, The Letters and Friendships of Cecil Spring Rice (London, 1929) I, 200.

# CHIROL'S MEMORANDUM

upon drew up for the Ambassador a Memorandum<sup>1</sup> in his own defence. Lascelles found it acceptable, but Wallace withheld his consent to Chirol's sending it to the Ambassador for handing on to the Wilhelmstrasse. In the meantime action was taken by the Germans. When Chirol next called both Marschall and Holstein were "out." Henceforth the doors of the Foreign Office were closed to him.

1 Text from Wallace Papers (C.U.L.): "Confidential, Berlin, January 25, 1896. I do not think Baron Marschall has any cause for astonishment at the tone of my telegrams to The Times.

"Ever since my return to Berlin in November both he and Baron Holstein had prepared me for some impending demonstration of hostility towards England by their repeated warnings that the selfishness and arrogance of British policy were exhausting Germany's patience and goodwill. The Transvaal itself was mentioned to me incidentally as one of the points besides Egypt where retribution might overtake us. Baron Marschall himself pointed out to me when the Emperor's telegram to President Kruger was published that H.M had not taken this step on any mere personal impulse, but after consultation with his advisers and that it was intended as 'a lesson to England' that she could not with impunity play fast and loose with Germany's friendship. His Excellency proceeded to explain that the British claim of suzerainty over the Transvaal was one in which the German Government could not acquiesce and that 'whatever the consequences might be' Germany could not 'tolerate' any British interference in the affairs of an independent State bound like the South African Republic to Germany by so many ties of sentiment and interest. He at the same time laid great stress upon the meaning of the determination arrived at by the German Government to land troops on an emergency in Delagoa Bay and send them into the Transvaal, and warned me most solemnly of the grave dangers to which England was exposing herself as Germany would not stand alone if she were driven to extremities. Two days later Baron Holstein sent for me and appealing to the friendly and confidential relations which had subsisted for some years between us used the following language to me: 'Things look very black and I do not think you realise in England how black they look for you. In such critical circumstances there are of course many things I cannot disclose to you, but I want to impress upon you once more, and through you upon your friends in England, before it is too late, that never since perhaps 1810 has England been in such a dangerous position as at the present hour. You have access to influential quarters. For your country's sake do what you can, I am an old friend of England and it is probably not I who shall be here to see my warning fulfilled but I know what I am talking about.

"That language has not indeed been borne out by the event, but no amount of conciliatory assurances can remove the impression which it left on my mind as to the hostile and minatory spirit in which Germany's interference in the Transvaal question was originally conceived. The only alternative explanation would be that the German Foreign Office deliberately imposed upon my good faith in order to make use of me for the furtherance of a policy of empty intimidation to which it hesitated to give official

expression.

"With regard to the influence of the German Government over the Press, I know perhaps more than Baron Marschall imagines, as an intimate friend of mine at one time presided over the Press Bureau of the Foreign Office. It may not be so skilfully worked as in Prince Bismarck's time but its ramifications are more extensive than ever, and I have good reasons for believing that the recent anti-English campaign in the press was initiated and carried on under direct instructions from that department and hardly anywhere with greater violence than in those organs for whose utterances it is most immediately responsible. It must be remembered also that as very few German newspapers have any telegraphic intelligence of their own from abroad and as the Telegraph Agency which supplies them does not issue a single telegram which has not received the official imprimatur of the Press Bureau and, in delicate questions, of Baron Marschall himself, the Government has in this respect at least a power of control extending virtually over the whole press of Germany, and its purpose can often be gauged both by what it suppresses and by what it allows to be published. That the Government has throughout this crisis placed the machinery of the Press Bureau very largely at the disposal of Dr. Leyds is only an additional indication of the unfriendly spirit with which, however, it may now disclaim any such intention, its policy towards England has been lately imbued.

P.S. I may add that Baron Marschall himself thanked me very cordially for the telegrams in which I originally drew attention to the growing danger of Germany's hostility and to the gravity of the steps taken here to affirm the right of intervention in

If it be allowed that Chirol was the victim merely of day-to-day diplomatic finesse and that he hardly had the right to complain, it is equally the fact that he had a genuinely strong liking for Holstein and other Germans. He thoroughly enjoyed being, as he was convinced, on terms of complete intimacy with them. Chirol's past service in the Foreign Office and his present connexions entitled him, he thought, to favoured treatment. He was rudely shocked to find himself subjected, by Germans whom he had regarded as friends, to the same treatment meted out to any other journalist. In all the circumstances, it would take a notably less human and more detached correspondent to overlook the treatment he had received at the hands of those who had made themselves so fully available to him when he took their side over the dispute concerning the Congo negotiations only two years earlier.

However, the foreign policy of *The Times*, as conducted by Wallace, was not to be changed by any matter of pique either on one side or the other. The basic questions, *i.e.*, whether Britain should enter into an alliance with Continental Powers, and if so, with which, and upon what terms, was not to be affected by such considerations as a correspondent's feelings. Those of Stillman, the Rome Correspondent, have been described. Wallace's detachment from them is patent in the correspondence with him. With Chirol, Wallace made no difference in principle. The relation of Britain to the Dual Alliance or the Triple Alliance would continue to be discussed on their merits. That was Wallace's plain and clear position and it was upheld by *The Times*. In the near background there remained the broad consequences for British policy of the Jameson Raid and the Imperial factor as a whole.

It was a factor that seemed in 1896 to make difficult a continuance of Britain's historic and "splendid" isolation. The German idea of a Continental bloc specifically organized to counter British policy towards South Africa had failed. In Britain public opinion was so determined to tolerate no intervention and Hatzfeldt's recommendation to the Wilhelmstrasse was so positive against it that the Germans were forced to see that, in view of their present strength, they would lose by giving further encouragement to Kruger. The Germans had to consider their allies; that was then, and none could say how long it would remain, their most irksome responsibility. The Germans were not strong enough to engage in a foreign policy free from such limitations as their allies were able to impose. Both Italy and Austria-Hungary were unfavourably impressed

<sup>1</sup> At pp. 252 ff., ante.

## ITALIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS BRITAIN

by the telegram to Kruger. Italy, at war in Abyssinia, lacking complete confidence in Austria, and desiring to be in alliance with England as well as with the Central Powers, was especially perturbed. Stillman, as a supporter of the policy of associating Britain with the Triple Alliance, duly conveyed the Italian view to Wallace. The Rome Correspondent was still in close touch with Baron Blanc, the Italian Foreign Minister, whose political fortunes depended upon the progress of the Anglophile policy.

Stillman's known sympathies, his faith in Blanc and his friendly relations with Pasetti and Bülow, the Austrian and German Ambassadors, continued to make him a useful channel of communication with Triple Alliance circles generally, and with Italy, in particular. The correspondent's report of Italian good will towards England came direct: "Blanc said to me 'You may say that Italy will always be with England while we are in power, even if we have to oppose Germany.' I asked him if I might say that in *The Times*; he said 'yes'; but thinking it over said it were better not to say it now."

Equally, both Blanc and Bülow together did their best to convince Stillman that relations between Italy and Germany were "more cordial than ever before." Crispi told him "that Austria and Italy were in perfect accord and would both support England in the East." But by the end of January, Stillman put before Wallace his opinion that "the absolute confidence in Wilhelm II, of which I have good evidence on the part of both Austria and Italy, and the hearty support of England if Germany be hostile, are incompatible." Such being Stillman's analysis and his general awareness of Bülow's tendency to equivocate, it is curious that the latter should succeed in convincing him that the Kaiser's telegram was an explosion of the Imperial temper provoked by the British refusal to permit Italy to use Zeila unless she obtained French consent.<sup>2</sup> Wallace already had solid reasons for treating the Rome Correspondent with reserve. Stillman's correspondence was now regarded as useful but inconsistent and requiring confirmation. He operated a complicated system of varying the signature of his telegrams to indicate to Wallace which were official or officially approved and which his own private observation or opinion. In consequence, although his reports as a whole had less weight than Lavino's and Chirol's, and sometimes had to give way to theirs when there was a conflict, he was nevertheless valued as a source of information of varying origin and authenticity.

<sup>1</sup> Stillman to Wallace, January 17, 1896.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Stillman to Wallace, January 27 and 28, 1896.

Assurances of Blanc and Bülow as to complete German-Italian confidence, sufficed to convince Stillman. He drew the same inference from his observation of the close relations between these statesmen in Rome and between Hatzfeldt and Ferrero, the ambassadors in London. That the real situation was very different is evident from a minute by the Kaiser to one of Bülow's dispatches, describing how he was trying to calm down the nervous Blanc. The Emperor's comment was that Hatzfeldt should keep in close touch with Ferrero. "Comfort him as Bülow does Blanc, thereby contributing to prevent Italy leaving us in the lurch when England quarrels with us."1 There were two main prongs to the Triplice diplomacy. First Blanc, through Stillman, was to convince The Times that Italy loyally supported British policy; and also that, whatever appearances might be, Germany was behind her in fact. Secondly, Bülow was to counteract Chirol's influence and to prove that the Triple Alliance was solid; and that Germany was not au fond hostile to England but only superficially ruffled by the selfishness and detachment of Lord Salisbury. There also existed the threat to employ a third prong; the Germans would continue to take advantage of any British embarrassment to press the value of the Triple Alliance.

But Chirol's information, sent privately at this time to Wallace, was to the effect that the Austrian Ambassador in Berlin had hinted "pretty plainly" that further anti-British steps by Germany

would deal an almost fatal blow to the confidence entertained in Vienna and Rome towards Berlin, and to which recent developments have already been severely strained. A friendly policy towards England was one of the unwritten laws by which the members of the Triple Alliance held themselves to be bound so long as England on her side observed a similar policy towards them, and though in some respects they might each of them have had from time to time reason to complain of England's attitude on minor questions, nothing had happened to justify such retaliatory measures as a campaign against England's position in Egypt would constitute.<sup>2</sup>

It became, therefore, all the more necessary for Bülow to urge upon Stillman the solidarity of Germany's allies and, next, to insist to Blanc that her policy was not anti-British. But the weight of the evidence remained what it had been. *The Times* continued to think that the Triplice was not firmly based. The paper, in consequence, took German threats the less seriously.

<sup>1</sup> G.P. XI, 79.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Chirol to Wallace, February 27, 1896. (C.U.L. Wallace Papers.)

## INTERNAL STRAINS IN THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

Equally Chirol's influence led *The Times* to accuse German policy of harbouring anti-British sentiments. Hence, for distinct reasons, neither Germany nor Italy and Austria welcomed a leading article of February 13. The paper then stated that although Germany had been thought to be sympathetic and conservative "yet it was suddenly made plain that Germany had for years been secretly planning the overthrow of our position in the Transvaal and incidentally the defeat of the whole policy of colonial consolidation in South Africa. . . . In both cases [there had been reference earlier to the Cleveland message concerning Venezuela] there was a chorus of jubilation from the countries not directly concerned, the net result being to show that Great Britain and her colonies can scarcely count upon a sympathetic voice outside their own frontiers."

Upon the publication of this comment, an Austrian diplomat, desiring to administer a corrective, approached Stillman<sup>1</sup> and gave him what amounted to a survey of European affairs, minimising German aims in South Africa and emphasizing the justice of suspicions created by Salisbury's Near Eastern policy. Disguised under a pseudonym, "Veronese" asked the correspondent to come and talk on certain questions, and especially on those raised in the leader of February 13. The talk was a long one. It was concerned especially with the passage quoted above. "Veronese" explained to Stillman, who duly reported to Wallace, that:

As there has necessarily been a certain community of ideas in the action of the Powers in the Triple Alliance, and an interchange of views which more or less approaches the condition of entire frankness, it is difficult to conceive that any such treacherous intentions as are conveyed in the article alluded to could be entertained by one of the Powers in it, or should entirely escape the others.

Stillman was the more serious since he held that from von Bülow he could never expect honest declarations on such a subject. But

"Veronese" is one of those diplomats who know that lies deceive nobody, and as his views are precisely in accord with those which I get here from all who are in a position to know, I think they are worth hearing. He absolutely and utterly excludes the existence of any such intentions as are in the article indicated, or that there has ever been in the German mind anything else than the *status quo* for Transvaal, or [anything like] a dream of a Great Germany in S. Africa, at the expense of the English African Empire, as one of my oldest friends and corre-

<sup>1</sup> On the assumption that it would go farther than Wallace.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In communicating with Printing House Square Stillman occasionally used a code for proper names; "Veronese" probably signifies Pasetti.

spondents in England believes. He maintains that so far as Germany had contemplated supporting England in the Levant, the intention was absolutely honest and held by Austria as well, and that in general the views I have tried to convey to you on the subject are correct.

"Veronese," however, had his doubts about the policy of England in the Levant, and assured the correspondent that Italy and Austria did not mean to be involved in the partition of Turkey. But although they did not know what Salisbury wanted, as a general policy they were disposed to support him. Stillman's report concluded with a narration of his personal views:

I have always known that . . . Austria was entirely opposed to a war for humanitarian purposes, but from what I can gather from other sources than "V." I am satisfied that if war had grown out of the pressure of England on the Sultan, Austria must have followed England, as I know that Italy would. And my conviction is that in this matter Germany was quite ready for the military solution, if it came. . . . There is no question in my mind that Austria-Hungary did not desire the raising of the Eastern Question, as England raised it; and that she was absolutely indisposed to any solution involving war in which she should be on one side and Russia on the other, although the Alliance as a whole was willing to take position with England, even if war should come. The evidence from various sources is that it was Austria, and not Germany, who opposed a military solution, while Germany, and not Austria, resented the manner in which the question was brought on in active opposition at Constantinople, and that on account of the manner and not the substance. As matters now stand Lord Salisbury has made an awful muddle of it, and if he acts with France we shall have the big European war which The Times opposed in the beginning and always. Nobody here can understand his policy.

I have written in haste, and perhaps before digesting the conversation, but you will make such use of it as you like.

Before these arguments could have effect, the Italian defeat at Adowa and the British decision to send an expedition to Dongola radically changed the situation. There is little evidence that Stillman's telegrams influenced Wallace. He interpreted them as additional illustrations of the weakness of the Triple Alliance and the shifts to which it led the diplomacy of Germany, its most powerful member.

Meanwhile, Chirol had not composed, as Wallace hoped, his differences with the Wilhelmstrasse. On March 2, 1896, he assured his chief that if any of his telegrams had betrayed bitterness he was sorry, but he added that it was difficult not to feel offended at German methods and Press references to himself.

## APPROACHING TRANSFER OF CHIROL

I enclose an article in the Hamburgischer Korrespondent which I have good reason to believe was written in the Press Bureau of the Foreign Office; and, in fact, I recognise in the epithet of "the Don Basilio of the Press" one of the favourite expressions of my friend Holstein, which, however, I certainly did not imagine he would confer upon one who has enjoyed so much of his confidence and never abused it. I have long wished to get away from Berlin, but it is rapidly becoming more than a mere wish.

The advisability of appointing a new man for Berlin was becoming obvious, for although Chirol was far from concluding that England and Germany were irreconcilable enemies, Anglo-German relations were clearly fated to be increasingly delicate, and it might well help to appoint another correspondent. German policy regarding Britain and her own allies in the spring of 1896 was now too devious, if not too obscure, for Chirol. "I fail to understand," he wrote on March 9 to Wallace, "how the official professions of an intense desire to restore former relations between England and Germany have hitherto found not the slightest echo in the semi-official Press, which simply went stark staring mad again over your very moderate and inoffensive leader on the position of Italy after the defeat at Adowa on Saturday."

# Wallace, replying on the 11th, recognized an

extraordinary attitude of the inspired Press with regard to the Abyssinian question. If your letter had reached me vesterday there would have been an allusion to the subject in to-day's leader, but I dare say the North German Gazette will be angry enough without that. . . . I had a visit yesterday of over an hour from Hatzfeldt. He tried to convince me that Russia would prefer the friendship of Germany to that of France if she had the choice, because the Germanic Powers could arrange for her the solution of the Eastern Question according to her wishes. I listened attentively and merely threw out a hint that it might prove a little difficult to reconcile Russian and Austrian interests. The conversation was carried on in the most friendly tone and opinions expressed on both sides à mots couverts. I had no doubt as to the object of my friend's visit. He evidently wanted to make me feel that we are in imminent danger of being isolated. In return I developed to him at some length my reason for thinking that a change was taking place in public opinion in England in the direction of a rapprochement with Russia and the abandonment

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cf. the midday edition of the Hamburgischer Korrespondent for February 29, 1896: "The issue of The Times which arrived yesterday, contains a report of its Berlin correspondent, dated February 26 [about Germany and Egypt]. To expose in detail the scale of mischievous insinuations and false allegations by which this Basilio of the Press is realizing his aim of raising suspicion against Germany and to deflect the anger of the British public over Salisbury's actions towards Germany, is superfluous."

of Egypt and the Mediterranean. In spite of his great diplomatic talents I thought I could perceive that he did not much like my thesis.

In the course of conversation on South African affairs, he said that the relations of the two Governments had never for a moment been troubled and that much harm had been done by the Press. In this I quite agreed with him and expressed my astonishment that the two organs in constant touch with the Wilhelmstrasse should have so misrepresented the views and feelings of the Government. To illustrate my meaning I related quite frankly how, in first reading the Emperor's telegram to Kruger I had intended to interpret it in the most charitable way and that I had been prevented by inspired telegrams from Berlin explaining the real intentions of those by whom the sending of the telegram had been approved. My friend evidently did not like this subject and sailed away from it on some general remarks about the so-called inspired organs in Germany having often views different from the views of the Government. In reply to this I confess myself to looking a little incredulous.

The continuance of friendly connexions between Wallace and Hatzfeldt-despite the fact that Wallace always expressed his point of view with great clarity and directness—contrasts sharply with what was going on in Berlin. Chirol's relations with the German officials continued to degenerate. He was still not admitted to the presence either of Holstein or Marschall. Nor was there any sign that the ban would be lifted. His dispatches reflected his point of view and the German officials repaid his printed criticisms by journalistic retorts. They even took the trouble to descend to private denigration. On March 14, Chirol reported to Wallace that "he had heard that Marschall has been talking a great deal about me of late and in rather offensive terms to Lanza, the Italian Ambassador, and others, and I think that kind of thing ought to be stopped; but in matters which are to a certain extent personal I like to have the benefit of other people's judgment." His proposal was to send Holstein a letter demanding an explanation, in default of which he would publish it. Lascelles saw no objection to the plan or to Chirol's proposed letter which was enclosed for Wallace's approval.

Wallace admitted the grievance but jibbed at the time and method of protest. The Germans, he wrote, whatever they said, were in fact "anxious to be on better terms with us," and hence the demand for an explanation might lead to an incurable rupture which was vastly to be deprecated by both sides. This last point was at once seen and accepted by Chirol. He replied to Wallace that "The chief point of course is that the relations between the two countries should resume their normal character." The inter-

# CHIROL OFFERS TO LEAVE BERLIN, 1896

national situation had changed. Egyptian affairs had now become the centre of diplomatic activity and the French crossing of British policy had produced the effect desired by the Germans. Britain once more came closer to the Triple Alliance and farther from Russia who, as France's ally, it was the German policy to detach. Thus the general situation, and in particular the Sudan campaign, not viewed favourably by Chirol, left Britain with no alternative but to entertain at once an officially correct attitude towards Germany and a hope that Anglo-German relations would improve. The Germans for their part now saw that nothing would suit them better than to put Britain under an obligation; and, as Chirol told Wallace, whether happily for us or not in the ultimate sense, it had to be acknowledged now that so far they had used their advantage "in a statesmanlike and generous spirit." 1

When, at the beginning of April, Anglo-German harmony seemed restored Chirol felt that the attitude of *The Times* needed to be brought into line, and was willing to make any sacrifice. On April the 4th he informed Wallace that:

If we are to gravitate once more in the orbit of the Triple Alliance it would be well to re-establish some *modus vivendi* with the German Government. You could easily offer me up on the altar of reconciliation, as in the present state of affairs any special usefulness that my services in Berlin may have had has ceased. Anyone else would do as well or better.

# Wallace replied thus:

Your letters of March 28 and April 4 are both very interesting. I am quite as sceptical as you are about the present professions of friendship, and I foresee that we shall probably have at no very distant date another outburst of hostility, but if it should come it will not very seriously disturb our equanimity. In my opinion Germany has two objects in view: first she wants to keep us in Egypt so as to avert the danger of an Anglo-French rapprochement: and secondly she wants to get us into the Triple Alliance. In the first object she will probably succeed; in the second I believe she will fail, and when she perceives she has failed the new outburst of hostility will probably come. Of course she will be very angry when she discovers that we are not quite so blind or short-sighted as she imagines. As the support which she gives us in Egypt is given for her own ends and not at all for our beaux yeux I cannot feel very much gratified, but so long as she is ostensibly friendly to us I am quite disposed to be ostensibly friendly to her, and to follow her own rule of policy-donnant donnant.2

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Wallace, March 24, 1896.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Wallace to Chirol, April 9, 1896. (F 3/427.)

Wallace's view of policy agreed with Chirol's so far as that the expedition to Dongola was a mistake; of the personal issue so far as to agree that *The Times* should look out for another correspondent in Berlin.

At the end of April, 1896, Chirol left the capital. The office came temporarily into the charge of the assistant correspondent. Earle, who ably did duty during the weeks that elapsed while the situation was being considered at Printing House Square. Charles Earle was the second son of John Earle, Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford. He was himself an Oxford man and had spent some time studying and teaching in Berlin before he met Chirol in 1893, and became his personal assistant. His health had never been robust, but his clear and attractive style of reporting made an excellent impression upon the office. Moreover, he was on good terms with Kayser, head of the German Colonial Department. When Wallace visited Berlin in May for the purpose of conducting a general examination of the situation, he resolved when a correspondent at Berlin was appointed, to promote Earle, by placing him elsewhere. It was taken for granted that the most experienced and mature observer available must be secured. Chirol's advice was naturally sought. He recommended for consideration a brother-correspondent with whom he had long been intimate. George Saunders, the representative of the Morning Post, whose period of residence in Berlin was already nine years, had distinguished himself by the quality of his correspondence. It was resolved to secure his services. But Saunders was under agreement to give his newspaper six months' notice from June, and in the circumstances it was decided to appoint ad interim a new recruit, also of distinguished reputation, who had been in view for some months.

Four years earlier, to be exact in the autumn of 1892, Chirol had received from the Chairman of Dalziel's Agency a letter introducing a young man, Henry Wickham Steed, who wished to become a journalist. Steed was then studying economics and philosophy at Berlin University. Chirol encouraged him, and occasionally used some items of German news which Steed supplied. Later, in Paris, Chirol again saw Steed and learned that he had acted as Central News Correspondent at the International Labour Conference in Zürich in 1893, and afterwards at Frankfurt-on-Main in 1894. In view of Chirol's interest in China, Steed presently sent him from Paris some valuable information upon railway concessions which the French had obtained from the Chinese Government. He struck Chirol as distinctly able, and he reported to the office favourably upon

## INTRODUCTION OF HENRY WICKHAM STEED

his character and merits. Steed had studied at Jena, Berlin and Paris Universities. He was a linguist, knowing French and German well, and with some knowledge of Spanish and Swedish. He was English by birth (Suffolk) and very young (25) for the position he held, at the time, of Paris Correspondent of Pulitzer's New York World. On the basis of Chirol's report, Wallace advised Bell that "it will be well to have a look at this chap." On December 11, 1895, Steed called at P.H.S. and favourably impressed Bell and Wallace. Unfortunately he appeared to be so closely connected with the New York World as to be unable to give much of his time to another newspaper. Later the business of the World took him to Berlin. He was there during March and April, 1896, and naturally saw Chirol; he was still there when Earle fell sick of an illness that was to be mortal. The circumstances were pressing. The Morning Post could not release Saunders before December 31, 1896. The office view was that Earle's health made it urgent to secure Steed's services, at least temporarily, without further delay. But a complication arose when Pulitzer arrived at Wiesbaden and made Steed a tempting offer to go with him to New York. Steed therefore informed Chirol that unless The Times could offer him a permanent engagement he could hardly refuse Pulitzer's offer. The matter was settled by a telegram from Chirol, authorized by Bell, which placed Steed in charge of the Berlin office until the end of 1896 on the understanding that he would thereafter become correspondent in Rome. Thus the Berlin agency of The Times came under the direction of a young man whose ideas about Germany were based upon independent personal experience. He had come to the conclusion that the atmosphere of contemporary Berlin was very different from that he had experienced as la student before the South African tension. He felt in 1896 that only a reversal of actual German tendencies could prevent a serious Anglo-German conflict in the near future.

Steed, with the advantage of being in correct relations with the German Foreign Office, rapidly established himself as a very useful stop-gap. The new correspondent's reputation as an observer of particular ability was confirmed on October 24 when the *Hamburger Nachrichten* published an article on Russo-German relations. Alone of correspondents, home or foreign, Steed attached Bismarck's name to the article, and thus enabled *The Times* to publish to the world that it was the Iron Chancellor himself who had revealed, first, that his "Reinsurance Treaty" with Russia was concluded behind the back of Germany's partners in the Triple Alliance; and, secondly, the secret refusal of Caprivi, appointed by the Kaiser as his successor, to renew it.

Steed continued to be successful in preserving correct relations with official Germany. On October 3, 1896, for instance, he had an hour's conversation with Kayser, head of the Colonial Department, who laid stress upon his great regret at the existence of any ill-feeling between England and Germany and expressed a wish that relations between the Colonial Department and *The Times* might be cordial. It was hoped also in Printing House Square that the Correspondent of the paper would receive due consideration at the Foreign Office. Bell, on a visit to Berlin, took the opportunity to point out to Steed that no unnecessary friction between official Germany and *The Times* was to be risked.

Among other incidents during Steed's six months' tenure of the Berlin agency, there occurred the Leckert-von Lützow case. It originated in a libel action over the Welt am Montag's alleged inaccurate report of certain toasts at the Breslau meeting between the Kaiser and the Czar. The trial, which dealt largely and intimately with the pro- and anti-Bismarck factions, discredited the Emperor, the Court, and the Secret Police, and among the Foreign Office personalities involved were Marschall and Prince Hohenlohe, who had brought the action. Marschall, subsequently, was relieved of his position and appointed Ambassador to Constantinople, and Bülow was appointed Foreign Secretary in his stead. Thus the greatest political excitement in Berlin marked the end of the year 1896.

It was in these circumstances that Steed handed over the representation of *The Times* to his successor, Saunders, and proceeded to Rome in accordance with the understanding already reached. Stillman, whose powers were failing, had repeatedly pressed Bell to send him an assistant whom he might train to be his successor. Wallace and Bell were not eager that any successor should tread precisely in Stillman's footsteps, though they wished the change to take place as smoothly as possible. They instructed Steed to show as much deference to his elderly colleague as circumstances, and efficient service to the paper, might permit. It was, however, understood that in the event of serious difficulty Steed would take charge.

On his way from Berlin to Rome Steed spent a fortnight in London to see Bell and Wallace and stayed a few days in Paris where he conferred with Blowitz and saw a number of personalities. De Pressensé, the Foreign Editor of *Le Temps*, presented him to Hanotaux, the Anglophobe French Foreign Minister, who lectured him upon the iniquity of British behaviour in

## STEED SUCCEEDS STILLMAN IN ROME

Egypt and threatened drastic reprisals in case the Dongola expedition should be followed up. In that event, said Hanotaux, French forces already advancing across Africa from West to East (the Marchand mission, which was to end at Fashoda two years later, was meant) would join hands with the victorious Abyssinians and take control of the Upper Nile. Steed reported this admonition to Blowitz who merely remarked: "Hanotaux is, no doubt, intelligent. But one-half of intelligence is to take account of the intelligence of others; and this half Hanotaux lacks."

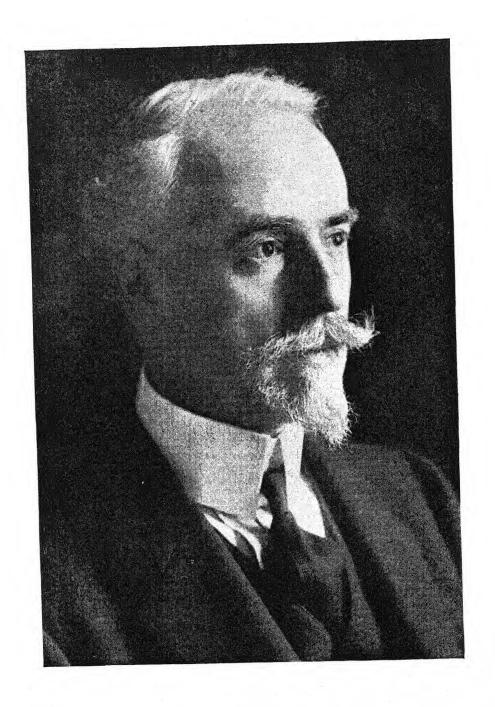
Steed went to Rome at the beginning of March, 1897. Anxious though he was to avoid friction with Stillman, to whom he felt attracted, and ready to accept the nominal position of assistant correspondent, he found Stillman's methods so eccentric that the interests of the paper compelled him to press for greater efficiency. Ministers, ambassadors, and political leaders, reserved in the presence of Stillman, began to speak freely to Steed who thus acquired information which could not be withheld from Printing House Square. The situation became more satisfactory when Bell wrote to inform Steed, then 26 years of age, that Stillman would retire on June 30.

The new Rome Correspondent had already shown his possession of a mind that was unafraid of criticism, contradiction or controversy. He had an interest in affairs that at times recalled the active politician rather than the detached observer; he had a zest in the collection of news that was rare in his branch of an intensely competitive profession; he brought to its interpretation more of the quality of the creative writer than had been common in the work of the correspondents of MacDonald's later period. Steed had been blessed at birth with wide and deep curiosity regarding men and affairs; he felt, too, equally as an individual and as an Englishman, a sense of mission; moreover he had not failed to benefit from his studies at Paris. Jena and Berlin, and his journalistic experience at Zürich, Frankfurt-on-Main and Berlin had made him the possessor of a mass of information concerning the economic and historic facts underlying the political situation of the principal European countries. He already had met many of the prominent continental statesmen and discussed political programmes with party leaders. The correspondent took easily to specialization without losing his sense of proportion. In outlook he was resolutely English; and, by upbringing, unlikely to overlook the moral and idealistic elements in political life. Allowing due importance to the economic factors, he held that racial, religious, or personal antipathies might also contribute to the making or

marring of policy. These non-economic factors he was inclined to survey from the point of view of an Englishman of liberal, rather radical, sympathies. It followed that Steed, in reporting Italian domestic issues, frequently felt obliged to champion the side he believed to be deserving of sympathy. The conscience of such a correspondent was naturally aroused by the strained relations in Italy of the ecclesiastical and the civil powers.

Early in Steed's career in Rome, Bell found it advisable to impart counsel which it was thought was not superfluous. He warned Steed not to take sides in Italian politics: "Your duty is to be an impartial observer. I do not mean to say you are a partisan, but I fear that if you are not careful to guard against such a thing, you might in time come to have a leaning that way." On another occasion Wallace enjoined that "A correspondent should listen to all prominent politicians and attach himself to none; he should always be in the orchestra stalls, but never jump on the stage." Wallace, very characteristically, also urged him not to allow daily journalism to monopolize his attention, but rather to devote his leisure to some branch of historical study and research. Steed readily accepted these injunctions.

Steed had known for years that he wanted to write. From July 1, 1897, he now had a subject of his own, and with it all the responsibilities of a correspondent of The Times accredited to a European capital. Behind him as his most recent experience. was his temporary stay in Germany, the dominant Power in the Triple Alliance; he now had, as a primary duty, the study of that Power's relations with Italy, and Italy's relations with Austria, her partner in the Alliance. Italy, at the time of Steed's appointment, was under the shadow of the disaster of Adowa. Crispi had gone in consequence of the national demand for a scapegoat, and Rudini, his successor, faced a troubled situation. In the spring of 1897 there was an attempt on the life of King Humbert. Behind the social and financial difficulties that needed to be faced, there loomed the unsettled question of the position of the Pope. The so-called "Roman" question was a powerful rather than an obvious factor in the national political situation. The diplomacy of the Vatican was inevitably secret, only its general tendency was evident: it was thrown into the balance against Italy, though not necessarily against Italy's associates in the Triple Alliance. The relations between Germany and the Vatican were of great interest, since the Triple Alliance was becoming increasingly dominated by Germany. It was less easy for Steed than for Stillman to avoid



HENRY WICKHAM STEED

### THE SITUATION IN ROME

the conclusion that that Power's deliberate policy, as revealed to all the world by the Kaiser's telegram to Kruger, might develop into a challenge to the British Empire.

As a new man Steed more keenly appreciated the fact that the interests of Germany, Austria and Italy were not identical. It was obvious to him that the two Germanic Powers were geographically compelled to make military arrangements regarding land frontiers, while Italy's maritime position compelled her to look to an extended coast-line for which neither Germany nor Austria could do anything. Thus the interests of Italy were served, in part only, by the Triple Alliance. Into any close Anglo-Italian understanding, Egypt and Abyssinia needed to be fitted and the new delimitations of the boundaries involved by the Italian settlement in Eritrea required to be adjusted to British ideas of security in the neighbourhood of the Lower Nile.

Rome thus offered the new Correspondent a singularly varied range of subjects for study and comment. The year 1898 was memorably full of incident. In February, Chamberlain's idea of an Anglo-German alliance<sup>1</sup> was mooted and the first German Navy Bill was passed in the following month. Germany, Russia, Britain and France obtained leases of Kiao-chow, Port Arthur, Wei-hai-wei and Kwangchow, respectively. War between Spain and the United States broke out in April. In May there were very serious political riots in Italy. In July, the United States annexed Hawaii. France, continuing her policy of pressing Britain in Africa, occupied Fashoda, which, however, she evacuated five months later. Delcassé became Foreign Secretary on July 30, and a very important Franco-Italian Commercial Treaty was signed in November. The year ended with the signature of the Treaty of Paris between the U.S.A. and Spain, which ceded Cuba, Porto Rico, Guam and the Philippines to the victors over the "Catholic" Power. Much attention was given to all these events in the "White" Rome of the Quirinal and the "Black" Rome of the Vatican.

The policy, both religious and secular, of the Vatican inevitably aroused Steed's moral sense. The Rome Correspondent, he once explained to Chirol, was "neither Protestant nor Catholic in sympathy; religiously and philosophically I am au dehors." If not Protestant in theology, Steed was thoroughly Protestant in mind, and his stay in Rome only made him more so. He was, therefore, well fitted to comment upon Vatican affairs in

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XII, p. 321.

a manner that would be satisfactory to free-thinkers like Bell and Chirol. Steed, moreover, was intimate with Paul Sabatier. the French Protestant theologian (and biographer of St. Francis), who, like himself, was a keen observer of the effect of modern scientific ideas upon the most ancient and most conservative of all Churches; and with Monsignor Denis O'Connell, the vicar in Rome of Cardinal Gibbons, the foremost dignitary of the Roman Church in the United States. The controversy between science and religion that had agitated Protestantism in the middle of the nineteenth century only in its last years became an issue in the Catholic Church. The turmoil interested the world. The Times and Steed, who frequently wrote upon ecclesiastical affairs as viewed by an Englishman of liberal Protestant sympathies. The paper's Vatican Correspondent was Monsignor Stanley, who acted under the supervision of Cardinal Rampolla. He found it necessary from time to time to criticize the observations of the Rome Correspondent, and on one occasion was successful in causing Steed to be asked to be "more judicial" in dealing with the secular side of Vatican policy. But it remained the settled thesis of the office that the attitude of hostility, permanently maintained by the Vatican towards the civil authority as represented by the Quirinal, contributed to the enfeeblement of Italian civil authority and social order. In June, 1899, Monsignor Stanley announced his inability to continue to act as correspondent of The Times. The occasion of his resignation was an article on the Dreyfus case, to the tone of which Stanley's new superior. Monsignor Merry del Val, took strong exception. The Times, though inclined to respect the views of Merry del Val, who had many friends in England, was not impressed by his protest on the case itself, since the Vatican had maintained complete silence upon it. The paper held that many English Catholics, not to mention the Protestants and others, were scandalised at the Vatican's refusal to raise its powerful voice against the violent racial and religious passions which the Dreyfus case had let loose upon France. That the prestige and moral influence of the Catholic Church had been seriously weakened was confirmed by the paper's correspondent in Paris. One effect of the Dreyfus case was to encourage The Times to support everywhere the anticlericals and modernists. Inevitably the Rome Correspondent's sympathies were on the side of the innovators, and in 1899 The Times gave prominence to his accounts of the condemnation by Leo XIII of "Americanism," a deviation from orthodoxy which comprised the teaching that the form of government in the United States was, for Catholics, preferable to all others as being far more favourable than any monarchical system to the practice

# CHIROL SUCCEEDS WALLACE IN 1899

of virtue. The transfer of the Philippines from "Catholic" Spain to "Protestant" America lent the controversy a political interest.1

Steed, naturally, was more comfortable in "White" Rome. He rapidly established himself in the esteem of statesmen, principal among whom was the Marquis Visconti Venosta, Italy's Foreign Minister, whose policy included, as a basic element, the maintenance of an understanding with Britain. The Italians, like the Austrians, had not looked with favour upon the Kaiser's telegram to Kruger, and watched with apprehension the consequent deterioration of Anglo-German relations. The concern felt by Italy, as a member of the Triple Alliance, at the continuance of Anglo-German friction, deepened when Visconti Venosta learnt at the end of 1897 that France was meditating a move of some kind in North Africa. Throughout the early part of 1898 Italian misgivings were grave and numerous. The circumstances of France's entry into Fashoda, and of her leaving, were felt as a humiliation by the Italians, since Lord Salisbury had omitted to consult the Quirinal before, or after, the settlement. This so wounded Italy's pride that she determined to act for herself in North Africa whenever the opportunity should come. Finally, the expectation that France, baulked at Fashoda, would march into Morecco set Italian nerves on edge.

In the autumn of 1898 Steed and the other correspondents found themselves under a new and congenial head. Bell's commitments with Hooper and Jackson over the Encyclopædia Britannica, with which the name of The Times was by now inextricably connected, forced him to recognize the urgency of restoring the value of the Encyclopædia's copyright and the prestige of its sponsor. Both had been reduced by the public criticism of much of the material.2 It was said to be out of date. The allegation was true. A series of supplementary volumes under the supervision of a first-class scholar was decided upon and Bell turned for editorial help and planning to Wallace. To lighten his task in the department of The Times, Chirol was brought in as his assistant. He conducted much of the correspondence with the foreign staff. In a few months it was seen that he would make a capable and energetic director. On January 1, 1899, Wallace assumed complete charge of the Encyclopædia Supplementary volumes and Chirol was appointed head of the Foreign Department. The foreign policy of The Times was to be his own, subject to the approval of Buckle, who, however, continued to show little personal interest in the details of Continental or Imperial politics. It was natural for Chirol to turn to Bell for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For *The Times* and the Dreyfus case, see Appendix, pp. 795 ff. <sup>2</sup> See Chapter XIV, p. 446.

counsel. Both conducted regular correspondence with the chief representatives abroad, particularly Lavino, Steed, Saunders and Morrison.

In the New Year, Steed informed Chirol, who had now taken official charge of the department, that

You may take it as absolutely certain that if France makes the slightest move in that direction Italy will go to Tripoli at all costs. I should not wonder (though on this point I have no positive information) if the propaganda going on in favour of "helping" England in Egypt were tolerated by the Government as a kind of foil to cover eventual preparations for an expedition to Tripoli.<sup>1</sup>

The position Italy was likely to take towards France was not clear. There was no consensus of agreement among the parties regarding foreign policy. Admiral Canevaro described to Steed the articles in certain Italian newspapers as "French attempts to compromise Italy in the eyes of the Triple Alliance" which made him "more than ever determined to prevent the Anglo-Italian agreement suffering any diminution of cordiality."2 The means by which French influence was brought to bear upon Italian publicists by the Ambassador, Barrère, were not unknown to the Rome Correspondent. He reported privately to the deputy appointed by Bell to take charge during the absence in China of Chirol. The locum tenens was Leopold S. Amery, who had joined the staff for the purpose of writing The Times History of the South African War. Giolitti, Steed said, was well furnished with funds from a certain source for the purpose of combating the Triple Alliance; but, nevertheless, that the festivities of Toulon should not be interpreted to mean that Italy would do what in fact was impossible for her to do, i.e., leave the Alliance. Yet it was certain that important conversations were pending. On April 3, 1901, Steed reported privately that "the German and Austrian Ambassadors tell me that they are convinced that there has been an exchange of notes between Italy and France regarding Tripoli, and that France has given Italy to understand that she would not oppose an eventual occupation of Tripoli." The correspondent later reported in detail the arrangements of Barrère with the Rome Press, and described the increasing influence of the Italian politicians who favoured a rupture with the Triple Alliance, and that of statesmen, like Prinetti and Zanardelli, whose studied ambiguity of language failed completely to screen their sympathies. Steed prophesied

<sup>1</sup> Steed to Chirol, January 5, 1899.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Steed to Chirol, April 20, 1899. The Admiral was not in favour of taking Tripoli. 'The action would cripple Italy both from the financial and military standpoint."

## FRANCO-ITALIAN APPROACHES

that although Italian commercial dependence upon the Triple Alliance could not be gainsaid and would prevent her openly leaving it, something short of a break might occur.

The correspondent found support for his opinion in a talk with the Marquis Visconti Venosta on March 30, 1901. He learnt that when in April, 1899, King Humbert and Queen Margherita visited Sardinia, the French Government had taken advantage of the presence of the Head of the Italian State in the immediate vicinity of French territory (Corsica) to send the French fleet to Cagliari. "This," said the Marquis, "was an act of courtesy suggested or, at least, justified by special circumstances, but not an act, in his opinion, necessitating a formal return of the visit, merely for the sake of returning it, by the Italian fleet to a French port." When, however, it was arranged by the French Government that President Loubet should visit Nice and Toulon, and should thus come into the immediate vicinity of Italian territory, the Marquis admitted that

It would have been discourteous on the part of Italy not to have shown the same deference towards the Head of the French State as France had shown towards King Humbert. This was the only reason for the Toulon visit, which would take place at Toulon rather than at Nice, ostensibly because there was no adequate harbour at Nice, but principally because, to his mind, at least, a sentiment of patriotic delicacy would have been offended by an exchange of courtesies between France and Italy in what was formerly an Italian port.

With regard to the newspaper polemics on the subject of the important question of the renewal of the Triple Alliance, the statesman deplored the

ill-considered action of the present Italian Ministers which tended to produce in France an expectancy destined to be deluded; and in Austria and Germany an irritation which, if prolonged, might hamper the negotiations for the renewal of the Triple Alliance and the commercial treaties. France had gradually come to regard the presence of Italy in the Triple Alliance as a fait accompli not incompatible with the maintenance of friendly relations between the two countries. Signor Prinetti's ambiguous conduct and the Zanardelli interview would revive hopes of detaching Italy from the Triple Alliance and might lead to irritation in France and, possibly, to reprisals, when the Alliance was renewed.

Visconti Venosta admitted the truth of Steed's remark that the tactics of the Italian Government resembled an attempt to levy commercial blackmail upon Austria and Germany; and

while agreeing with his contention that, "international politics consisted largely of levying blackmail in one form or another." insisted that it was equally true that any Power which attempted such an operation must be prepared to take the consequences of failure. The practical question, added the Minister, was not whether Italy had done well or ill to enter the Triple Alliance. but whether it would now be to her advantage to leave it; and he had no doubt that it would be a disadvantage. Neutrality. in the event of complications, would be impracticable, for he did not think the Italian nation would long support the dangers and the expenditure inseparable from a policy of isolation. An offensive and defensive alliance with England alone would be inadequate from a territorial-military point of view; and, said Visconti Venosta, such an arrangement would probably irritate France even more than the Triple Alliance. On the other hand, he told Steed, to join the Franco-Russian alliance would be to assume the responsibility of displacing the whole Continental equilibrium. In all probability it would sow the seeds of serious European complications. He said nothing direct about Russia, but admitted that if Italy abandoned Austria and Germany, the latter would probably organize commercial and perhaps even political reprisals. Hence Italy could not be blamed for preserving towards France an attitude closely similar to that of Germany towards Russia. Moreover, it should be recognized that the only serious difference between Italy and Austria was that concerning Albania. He was convinced, and had declared his conviction to the Chamber, that Austria had no territorial designs upon Albania.

As to the relations between Italy and England, Visconti Venosta told Steed that the failure to send a prince of Royal blood to King Humbert's funeral was disagreeable. The Maltese language question was a pin-prick, probably inadvertent, which, however, he who had studied the question, thought England might have avoided. Where England had shown a disregard of Italian aspirations that amounted almost to unfriendliness, was in the Anglo-French agreement of 1899 with regard to Tripolitan Hinterland. When England and France were approached by Admiral Canevaro on the subject of an eventual agreement after Fashoda and of the influence of that incident upon Italian aspirations, the language of England was more reserved and less friendly than that of France; and, what was worse, while making the agreement, England gave away the Tripolitan Hinterland to France without a word of warning to Italy. He suspected, indeed was convinced, that Italy, as

## VISCONTI VENOSTA TALKS TO STEED

a power, did not enter into Lord Salisbury's political purview. "Tripoli" said Visconti Venosta, "could not be taken by Italy without preparation, nor without some justification, but, in the event of his being in power when the moment came, he would not venture to ask the approval of Lord Salisbury." He had no certainty that England would not oppose Italy's acquisition of Tripoli, but he was practically sure that no opposition would come from France. In view of such contingencies the geographical community of Anglo-Italian interests and the sympathy between the two peoples would doubtless lead to a close understanding with England, but, at the present moment, the relations between Italy and all the other Continental Powers were more intimate than with England. As an example Visconti Venosta said that during his recent tenure of office (May, 1899—February, 1901) he had not had to negotiate "a single affair of any importance with Lord Salisbury." Following this discussion, Steed's doubts that the Triple Alliance would be renewed in June next year vanished. Peace was likely to remain unbroken provided France made no fresh move in North Africa, disturbed none of the conditions existing in Tunis, raised no objections to Italian immigration into the French countryside, or objected to the acquisition of Tripoli "when the moment came."

In the office it was believed no anti-Italian action by France would be taken. She was prepared in fact to go to considerable lengths to associate Italy with herself in commercial matters. Chirol was soon able to inform Steed that the impression "in official circles" was that "Italy has gone over bag and baggage into the French camp." For ourselves, he said, we "must accept the fact and make the best of it." In view of secret negotiations, few details of which were known at the time to Printing House Square, the situation was not, it is clear to-day, developing badly for Britain. 1 Chirol already hinted privately that possibly in the long run a Franco-Italian rapprochement might even be useful to Britain as offering a connecting link between ourselves and our neighbours across the Channel. Chirol doubtless meant to say that the value of Italy as such a link increased in proportion to her lessening connexion with the Triple Alliance. At the time, none could say how fast would be the drift of Italy towards France, or the reaction to it of Germany and Austria.

The situation needed the most careful watching. Simultaneously, important transfers in *The Times* staff were under consideration.

<sup>1</sup> Described in the next Chapter.

The period of Blowitz was drawing to its foreseen end. Bell had already determined to transfer Lavino1 from Vienna and proposed to move Steed. Warning to that effect in July was not agreeably received by that correspondent. He had now been in office for nearly five years and had made many close friends in Rome. Wallace had chosen him to write the History of Italy from 1860-1900 for the 10th edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica, and he had been asked to organize the writing of the whole of the economic, archaeological and geographical articles in the Italian section. The scientific quality of his work for the encyclopædia, which, when completed, had earned the commendation of such a judge as Mackenzie Wallace, had acted as a discipline upon his journalistic writing and he nursed the ambition to write a serious book on contemporary Italy before coming into the office in a certain capacity. Steed therefore had his reasons for not desiring to leave the focus of what promised to be highly interesting international developments. Bell overrode his objections, pointing out that the not very distinguished future he had worked out for himself of acting as "a devil" for Chirol, depended upon his being willing now to go where he was required. But his ambition, Bell straightly told the young correspondent,

should not be to qualify as a devil for Chirol, but to qualify for Chirol's place. The man who eventually takes that position must be the man who has most general experience. Your route lies via Vienna, perhaps to Berlin, perhaps to Paris, and then to London.

Berlin had altered since Chirol's time, as the next Chapter will show; it had not become less important. Vienna was a very important capital, too, added Bell. "Francis Joseph can hardly live five years more. The Austria-Hungary monarchy after his death would present problems of the utmost seriousness." And it was because Bell regarded it as likely to be so important he had chosen, for Vienna, Steed who "would prefer to live in inglorious ease in Rome."

Upon this rebuke Steed withdrew his objections. Blowitz's retirement duly took place in June, 1902, when Steed had served nearly six years in Rome. At the end of the term the outgoing correspondent contributed to *The Times* an important article on British Foreign Policy. It was printed after his departure, and accompanied by a leading article on December 18, 1902. The progress of Franco-Italian *rapprochement* was due largely to the activities of the French Ambassador, Barrère. It had been

<sup>1</sup> For Lavino's movements see supra, pp. 140-1; infra, pp. 375-7.

#### STEED SUCCEEDS LAVINO AT VIENNA

his policy to detach Italy from the Triple Alliance by associating her with France, and next to release the German hold upon Austria, by associating her with Italy. *The Times*, naturally, gave general support to Franco-Italian amity. Steed's article by no means pleased the Italian readers of the telegraphed summary.

Steed was succeeded in Rome by William Francis (Wilfranc) Hubbard, formerly correspondent at Madrid and Lisbon. He was the son of the Rev. Thomas Hubbard, Vicar of St. John, Newbury, and brother of the first Lord Addington and son of John Hubbard, of Hubbard and Co., the Russia merchants. His mother was the daughter of a diplomat, Sir Woodbine Parish, F.R.S., who accomplished much in Argentina. Wilfranc Hubbard was educated at Winchester, Radley and Christ Church. Oxford. On leaving the University he went to Sofia as tutor to the two sons of Sir Frank Lascelles, in whose company he met Chirol. Later he joined his younger brother on an estancia in the Argentine. At this time he began to write contributions to Macmillan's Magazine and the Spectator. On his return to England Hubbard renewed his acquaintance with Chirol, who induced him to join the foreign staff of The Times. His knowledge of Spanish fitted him for service in Madrid, to which capital he was posted in July, 1899. Hubbard's keen interest in classical archaeology and philosophy balanced his relatively slight interest in politics, and Chirol was glad to recommend him for Italy. He at once made a success in both White and Black Rome, with, however, a policy towards the Vatican that was to differ from his predecessor's.

As Steed made his preparations for departure, he was given farewell parties by Rennell Rodd, Barrère and Rotenhan (Prussian Minister to the Vatican). Of lasting importance to Steed was a final interview with Visconti Venosta. The Italian statesman, taking advantage of the correspondent's reputation for discretion, urged upon him the view that the aggressive policy of Germany would at length compel Britain to fight, unless she were willing to forfeit her place in the world. Italy's situation between the two Powers was tragic; she could neither leave the Triple Alliance without a war; nor, as a member of it, risk a war with Britain. But although it followed that Italy's interest was to avoid war, peace could not come automatically; it had to be worked for and secured. It was vital, therefore, that the good relations of Italy and Austria should be maintained and. if possible, improved. As it was, German agents embittered every Austro-Italian dispute; and, as payment for diplomatic intervention, demanded compensation from both parties, with

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the added gain to herself that Austria and Italy are kept in a constant state of irritation. "At present," he said, "Germany plays off Austria against Italy, and plays Italy off against Austria," because by so doing she was able to command a majority and thus to control the policy of the Triple Alliance. Hence, the seriousness of the antagonism between Germany and Britain, and hence the necessity of countering it by smoothing out the differences between Austria and Italy. "No Italian Ambassador can explain this to the Austrians. It would be too dangerous" said the Minister. "But," he continued, "you might do it." He pressed upon Steed the necessity of winning the confidence of the Austrian Government. "Do what you can to persuade the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, Count Goluchowski, of the truth of what I have told you." These words made a deep impression upon Steed, who determined to do his utmost to assist the policy so clearly outlined to him by Visconti Venosta, and he duly informed his successor in the office to that effect. He shared Visconti Venosta's view that Germany's aggressive policy constituted a danger to Britain. It was a view that had gained support in the office but had not vet become a conviction. Since Steed had departed from Berlin in the early part of 1897 Anglo-German relations had not improved. In consequence, as the next Chapters describe, Britain found it wise to contract an alliance with Japan. The five years that had elapsed since Steed left Berlin had, in fact, witnessed the end of British isolation. The hope was entertained that further strain might be avoided.

Steed's successor in Berlin, however, had little doubt that German policy was designed to challenge whenever possible the position of the British Empire. This was the conclusion that he found it impossible to avoid.

# XI

# SAUNDERS AT BERLIN 1897-1900

EORGE SAUNDERS was the son of David H. Saunders, of Dundee and Blairgowrie. His father was the Editor of the Christian Democrat, and Saunders was himself a Christian, faithful to the Bible all his life. The boy went from Rattray Parish School to Dundee High School, whence he went to the University. At Glasgow he attracted the attention of Edward Caird, won the gold medal for moral philosophy, and secured a scholarship to Balliol College, Oxford. By this time he was an ardent lover of Latin and Greek, which were life-long pleasures to him. The critical study of the text of the Greek New Testament was another permanent legacy of his Oxford days. Enthusiasm for the Bible and philosophy, with his father's urging, took him to Bonn and Göttingen. Returning to London he read for the Bar. But an accident drew him from the Law to Saunders made by chance the acquaintance of iournalism. W. T. Stead, at that time Editor of the Pall Mall Gazette. Stead persuaded Saunders to interview Boulanger for the Pall Mall Gazette. His successful accomplishment of this mission and his proficiency in languages induced his editor to take him as his personal assistant on the occasion of his visit to the Czar in 1888. Thus Saunders was valued as a journalist, and himself came to value the career. There were two things Saunders never forgot; the first was his Bible, the second was his native land. The Bible he read every day; Perthshire he visited every year. With his roots in Scotland, Saunders remained throughout his life a singularly simple character. At the time at which he joined the staff, Saunders was just under forty, a tallish, blue-eyed, handsome man with a flaming moustache and a frank open manner. He kept fit in summer by regular golf, and in the winter exercised himself, to the amusement of the Berliners, at curling. It was his pleasure to roam through the country on foot, listening to music, reciting poetry, learning country songs. For relaxation at home he read philosophy and belles-lettres.

Saunders's student days at Bonn and Göttingen taught him to admire the thoroughness of the German professor and the seriousness of the German student. He became familiar with the common man in town and country; he recognized the keen materialistic concern of the Hausfrau in the details of food and drink and physical well-being; he recognized the extraordinary touchiness of Germans of every class. Saunders's German, like his French, was accurate and fluent, vernacularly good but spoken with an incorrigible Scots accent. He took the greatest pride in his own nationality, but there was nothing exclusive about it and he never forgot to respect German sensitivity. In 1893 he married Gertrude, the daughter of Oscar Hainauer, a well-known Berlin banker. Hainauer was a cultivated man, a prominent art collector and connoisseur, and Saunders was enabled by his marriage to enter intimately into German life. making family connexions with Junkers, officers and professors. as well as with bankers, shipowners and industrialists. The new correspondent was admirably equipped for his work. No more intelligent selection, as time proved, could have been made.

But none of the qualified political observers that *The Times* appointed to its Continental service in the nineties was destined to be permanently agreeable to the German Government: Chirol became a deep disappointment; Steed an occasion of fear; Saunders an object of hatred. Saunders, like Chirol (and no other correspondent apparently), knew something of what took place in the conference at the Reichskanzlei which preceded the dispatch of the Kruger telegram of January 4. Saunders's distrust of Germany went deeper than Chirol's. It was based upon a longer period of observation and a deeper knowledge of the country and its people. The Germans had blundered indeed when they chose to break off relations with Chirol. This, therefore, was the position at Berlin when Steed departed to Rome and resigned the correspondentship of *The Times* into the hands of Saunders.

Saunders began work for *The Times* in the first week of 1897. His first contribution as "From Our Own Correspondent," dated January 7, appeared in the following day's paper. The immediately important events were the arrival of Count Goluchowski, the Austrian Foreign Minister, who came to Berlin on January 16, the Press discussions which followed the Commons debates on the South African question and the subsequent appointment of the Select Committee of Inquiry into the Jameson Raid. Saunders's telegrams of January 31 and February 4 deal with German eagerness to anticipate the verdict

#### SAUNDERS AND HOLSTEIN

of guilt against Chamberlain. His messages contained quotations from the leading Press organs of public opinion, all unmistakably hostile to Britain.

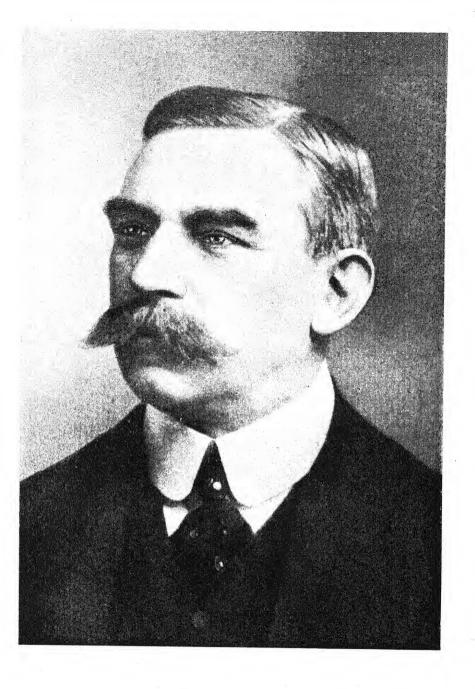
On February 7, 1897, Holstein invited Saunders to one of his Sunday meetings at his favourite restaurant in Grunewald. Saunders was well acquainted with Holstein to whom he had been introduced by Hainauer, his father-in-law. They had not met for months, and on this first occasion since Saunders's appointment as correspondent of The Times, they discussed appointment as correspondent of *The Times*, they discussed tête-à-tête for two hours the diplomatic situation of the day. As to Egypt, Holstein said that whatever happened, the Germans felt perfectly at ease, since in any case they stood to gain. "Even should you choose to make friends with France, the result would only be that Russia would want us more than ever." There were no objections even to our making a clean sweep in Egypt. Saunders forbore to contrast Holstein's show of good will with the more than doubtful tone of the semi-official Press. The correspondent had made up his mind to regard his invitation as betokening a wish for reconciliation between the Wilhelmstrasse and The Times, and he knew it to be a correspondent's first business to initiate and to continue cordial relations with the officials of the country to which he had been sent. As Saunders knew, it was out of the question for the German Foreign Office to permit a foreign correspondent to note, let alone to emphasize, and above all in a telegram, a discrepancy between the real policy of the Government—as privately given, for some reason or other, to himself—and the published statements made in another sense in a semi-official newspaper, for another reason and for another audience. According to the theory acted upon by the Wilhelmstrasse, it was manifestly absurd for any correspondent who should make public such a discrepancy to be given access to official persons. On the other hand, the German Foreign Office was careful to avoid making clear the extent of the authority carried by newspapers it employed to give currency to official views. It had been a source of particular irritation to Chirol to find himself criticized in paragraphs which he judged from their style to have originated in the Wilhelmstrasse. When, in the course of talk with Saunders, Holstein made frank mention of Chirol, there followed mention of the Nord-deutsche Zeitung. Holstein said that the journal was not official or semi-official, but that easily distinguishable pieces were directly inspired. He added that if attacks upon England appeared with any regularity in that journal so also did reports of the incidents which were their cause, *i.e.*, acts of brutal want of

consideration for others which characterized British action everywhere and made everyone her enemy. It was at this point that Saunders preferred to break off.<sup>1</sup>

Saunders did not wish to argue, for he was determined to part with Holstein on the friendliest terms. During the conversation no reference had been made to the personality of the Emperor. He had become an additional source of concern to any commentator upon German affairs. The resident correspondent who acknowledged that, generally speaking, his first duty to his newspaper was to maintain his power to correspond. had already learnt to refrain from inviting ostracism by criticizing the actions of the Kaiser. The situation was well and sympathetically considered at P.H.S. Bell and Wallace had revised the earlier practice of The Times by encouraging Chirol, Lavino and Steed to secure direct from the officials statements of the official view. Moreover it was Wallace's general policy to refrain from printing in a leading article any comment that would increase the difficulties of a foreign correspondent's work. Saunders had long recognized that in The Times there existed a certain margin. great or small, according to circumstances, between the expression of the view of a foreign correspondent and its explicit endorsement as a term of policy by The Times in its leading articles.

If Saunders's position as a correspondent excluded direct criticism either of the Kaiser or of the Wilhelmstrasse, he remained free to study and to report the contemporary manifestations of public opinion as revealed in the temper shown at public meetings, the resolutions adopted at political gatherings, or the contents of magazines or specialist reviews as well as the leading articles and campaigns that appeared in the Press in all parts of the country. By his analysis of the official and semi-official Press, of the progress of groups of patriots and of societies. nationalistic and socialistic, he was able to keep The Times in close touch with the sentiments of the politically effective sections of public opinion. At the same time he succeeded in avoiding friction with Holstein and his colleagues. Saunders supplemented his printed messages with long private letters addressed at first to Wallace, and from 1899 to Chirol. These were invariably circulated to Bell. Whether Buckle saw them depended upon their subject. The Editor having complete confidence in his foreign assistant-editor was not inclined to intervene in questions of Continental politics unless, at a critical point, they threatened a domestic issue.

<sup>1</sup> Saunders to Wallace, February 10, 1897.



GEORGE SAUNDERS

# "ENGLAND MUST RECKON WITH THESE THINGS"

Prominent among the matters of the gravest international concern with which Saunders was called upon to deal during the first years of his tenancy of the Berlin correspondentship were the big Navy schemes. These schemes were to be viewed. Saunders argued, as the Kaiser's challenge to his own people: "Are you prepared to stand up to England on equal terms? If so, you must pay for the big fleet." If this interpretation were correct, it followed that in order to pass such a large appropriation through the Reichstag, increased anti-British agitation must be first resorted to as the necessary means of inflaming patriotic emotion. As a nation Germany was in a confident mood. She was conscious of an increase in material wealth. In addition, "There is," wrote Saunders to Wallace, as one Scot to another, " an immense reserve of brains; also much brainwork completed or in progress, and waiting to be turned to practical account and into capital." Moreover Germany, unlike France, was not held back by any recent memory of military disaster but pressed forward by the contrary emotion: "A weltmachtpolitik would no doubt strain the resources of the country but to that the people here are quite accustomed." Some sections of society had another motive for favouring such a policy: "without it the electors would begin to propose reforms, criticize the situation, assail the privileges of the Army and other classes." Saunders concluded by emphasizing the importance and strength of the "compressed energy," physical and intellectual, of the German nation and the existing policy of its rulers in letting it find vent. "England must reckon with these things and answer German naval expansion with energy and speed" was the early warning he gave.1

Nor was it as if the Germans were technically inefficient or incapable. They had already a vast amount of brainwork to their credit, and they had the fingers as well as the brains. British naval observers at Kiel had assured Saunders, he wrote later, that ship for ship the German Navy was "perfect." In addition they had the men. The same observer reported that "the discipline and behaviour of the crews were a pleasure to see." None of this should be forgotten. It was to be remembered, too, that the Germans as a people had yet hardly begun to think in terms of navies. The national view was still exclusively military and ranked the Powers according to the ratio of their standing armies. Germany felt equal to any nation, even without taking her navy into account. This was serious. Saunders's estimate was that a highly trained standing

<sup>1</sup> Saunders to Wallace, March 8, 1897.

army of enormous dimensions, and a navy similarly well trained of comparatively small dimensions but due for expansion, combined to face the British Empire with a menace of the very greatest gravity. The view in Printing House Square was less definite but that the Germans were to be watched was admitted. Saunders, however, was forced to prophesy that "We shall have to reckon with these people long before anything like a decisive reckoning with Russia comes." This was a view that had the backing of Wallace. "A modus vivendi with Russia," Saunders proceeded, "is more easily attainable than with Germany either now or in the future." That, too, was the view of Wallace. But both these considerations were still outside the reckoning of Chirol, whose position in the office was then about to undergo a change. There was no desire in the office to make unnecessary criticisms of German policy or German personalities.

Chirol entered upon his responsibilities as successor to Wallace<sup>2</sup> with a mind dominated by fear of Russian aggression in the Near and Far East. He did not admire German diplomacy but considered the cooperation of Germany was desirable and the Germans, Holstein at least, recognized Chirol's desire to seek a modus vivendi with them. He was ready to favour German railway contractors in their attempts to secure concessions in Anatolia; for, said Chirol to the dissenting Saunders: "If we stand out, it is much better that Germany should step in rather than Russia or France. The grapes are sour and why not gracefully hand them over to Germany as far as we are concerned."3 Saunders, it has been seen, was in greater fear of Germany. It was a rational fear, however uncommon at the time, and led him into opposition against indiscriminate collaboration with Germany. But he was none the less anxious to find a basis for friendship with the Germans. Their policy could not, he thought, be changed by any number of friendly expressions on our part. On the Anatolian project, or any similar question, Saunders's attitude was clear as his conviction was firm. "Germany's voice and influence will be used, as it has always been used, in order to bargain with both parties. . . . The

<sup>1</sup> In January, 1898, Queen Victoria made representations through Sir Theodore Martin to a number of London journals (including Punch) whose comments upon the German Emperor had been critical or facetious. Martin admitted the "conciliatory temper of our principal journalists." (Martin to the Queen, January 13, 1898.) On January 14 he saw the Editor of The Times whom he found "quite in accord with the other journalists" but Buckle said that "a very bitter feeling against the Germans generally prevailed throughout the country. (Martin to the Queen, January 14) (Queen Victoria's Letters, III, 224-5); Cf. Wallace to Saunders, January 27, 1898: "We think it advisable not to say at present anything unnecessarily irritating to the Germans. This does not, of course, exclude legitimate criticism, but if they are now inclined to write about us in a less hostile spirit we may meet them half-way."

2 In the circumstances described at p. 287.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In the circumstances described at p. 287. <sup>3</sup> Chirol to Saunders, September 4, 1899. (F. 4/428.)

#### GERMAN ANGLOPHOBIA

less we have to do with her the better. . . . We shall soon enough have to come to close quarters. In 30 years—that is not long we shall perhaps be at each other's throats. I feel that, as I feel the change of weather in my bones."1

The critical state of British relations with the Boer republics gave point to the observation. There was no room for debate that German public opinion unanimously favoured the Boers, although there may have been some doubt as to the basic reason for it. The crisis was going from bad to worse, but in Britain generally and in P.H.S. it was taken for granted that the Boers would not fight. The German Nationalist papers were naturally the more Anglophobe, while the Government strove to maintain an attitude that was correct and neutral. The reasons for that neutrality were, in Saunders's view, not due to frank friendship. The Conservatives and the Colonialists, as actively political groups, had for obvious reasons long been hostile to Great Britain. But that the Liberals, too, should be pro-Boer put German amity, or even neutral feeling, out of the question, and that despite all official protestations of friendship. The vogue of Anglophobia in Germany was general, which was the significant thing. Not all used the language of the Pan-Germans, whose party discourses upon the sins of the British were regularly salted with references to the "Gottverfluchte Engländerei"; and whose propaganda telegrams to Berlin protesting against the British maltreatment of the Boers who were their "Volksgenossen" always ended with "Heil Alldeutschland." The country as a whole was vehemently pro-Boer and Saunders regularly dispatched to The Times extracts from the German Press proving it. As far as he could see to it, there would be no mistake at home on the fundamental point: as a nation the Germans were markedly hostile to Britain. It followed that the official attitude did not really signify as much as its spokesmen claimed. There was evidence of a strong undercurrent of anti-British feeling in Government circles, but as for the public official tone, Bülow certainly wished it to be mild.2

Saunders's observation in the same week seems to hint that he had found traces of some such instruction, and says that it was only partially effectual:

Without for one moment desiring to question the loyalty of German official neutrality, I must point out that there is so little popular confidence at present in the stability and consistency of the German Government that the general public and, perhaps, the authors of the

<sup>Saunders to Chirol, September 15, 1899.
Bülow to German F.O. September 20, 1899. (Dugdale III, 102.)</sup> 

Anglophobe articles themselves do not accept without reserve the assurances of the semi-official Press on that score. (*The Times*, September 27, 1899.)

It is matter for discussion whether Saunders was correct in his estimate of the strength of German Anglophobia, or, if he was, how he could expect the authorities to flout it. Bülow's instructions to the Foreign Office, it will be pointed out, prove that he was refusing to yield to public clamour and that far from following the easiest course, the Government were pulling hard against the current of opinion. Saunders's answer was that the Government were secretly satisfied with the state of German public opinion for the reason that they could not pass their Navy Bill without it. Hence he naturally continued to report anti-British manifestations.

In England, however, a strong pro-German current had set in. The Kruger telegram had been forgotten. Britain needed friends. The Times was in agreement. There was nothing to be looked for across the Channel. The Drevfus case convinced Chirol that France was morally degenerate. The Fashoda crisis completed the process of forcing Chirol into the ranks of those who discounted France's present and future striking power. His private correspondence in the first months of the Boer War makes every allowance for Germany. The Anglophobia of her Press, he thought, was much less objectionable than that of the French; that it "had at least some method about it" appealed to him. In Chirol's view it was just "a deliberate attempt at chantage to screw concessions out of us in respect of Samoa." He saw no more in German Press attacks and their method than that; and was correspondingly optimistic regarding the future of Anglo-German relations. The Press "method" did not necessarily denote a systematic policy designed to compel Britain to come to her side, or that there existed parallel military and naval policies designed for the same purpose. He had no fear that in a few years Britain's Continental policy would be settled by the simple fact, created by the consistency and forcefulness of German foreign, military and naval policy, that she would have no alternative but to take Germany as her ally; and on Germany's own terms. But these were the fears of Saunders.

That Chirol's policy to cultivate Germany was generally approved depended immediately upon the fact that war had been declared on Kruger. Ultimately it depended upon a view of Russia that differed from Wallace's and a view of Germany that

#### A GERMAN NAVY BILL

differed from Saunders's. Chirol's mind continued to be haunted by Russian intrigues in parts of the world having overwhelming importance for British interests. The extension of the Trans-Siberian Railway, the lease of Port Arthur, the agitation on the Indian frontiers were all far more dangerous than Germany in Europe, at Kiao-Chau or Samoa. These, too, were Chamberlain's views. The Kaiser's postponed visit was due to take place on November 20, 1899, and in that interval the Colonial Secretary gave serious thought to the position of England. An understanding with Germany was placed, with other items, on the agenda for conference between himself and Bülow.

The Times touched upon the subject of German naval expansion in a leader by Chirol published on October 30. Its terms, contrary to Saunders's representations, were tantamount to approval. He was far from recognizing in the Bill a consistent attack upon British sea-power, timed to embarrass us now that the war in South Africa was multiplying tenfold the original British estimates in terms of men and money. But The Times admitted that on our side "We can hardly be expected to welcome a policy on the part of Germany which, whenever we see it brought into action, may make a considerable addition to our Naval Estimates a necessity." On the German side the article allowed that "the German Empire has a great and growing commerce, and large colonial interests, which, though not yet very prosperous or progressive, claim protection from a State of the first order." The way seemed open for a businesslike meeting during the Kaiser's visit. The talk ranged over these topics and Chamberlain emphasized the view, an obvious truth to him, that England needed Germany as Germany needed England. There would come a time when both Powers would be faced by the vast Russian armies. This, roughly speaking, was Chirol's view; also Bell's. They were ready to welcome an understanding with Germany, and thought that it could be arranged provided good will existed on the other side and the full implication of German neutrality was realized here.

But Saunders in Berlin continued to emphasize the importance of the underlying factors and illustrated them by quoting from representative examples and thus tacitly appealed from official neutral Germany to a public unneutral opinion. The agitation helped the prospects of the Navy Bill at home. But the German Government saw there was a corollary: to allow the agitation to incite British public opinion to take counter-measures would be disastrous. It was the one thing that German policy could not then afford and would not be in a position to afford for some

years, i.e., until the new fleet was in being. In 1899 the British Navy was strong enough to settle accounts with the German flotilla as well as to convoy troopships to South Africa. The German Government had no doubt on the point of British superior sea-power at this time. It was their principal reason for the Navy Bill and, moreover, they knew they would need increases well beyond the present acknowledged programme before they could run the risk of a serious clash with Britain. The publicity given in The Times to German public resolutions and manifestos against England was, for this reason, highly unwelcome to the German Government.

Naturally, Saunders's policy, and Lavino's also, to guard against German ambitions by an understanding with France and Russia, was premature. Chirol, it has been seen, regarded Russia as the greater menace; France as her weak and demoralized ally. The continued, though guarded, advocacy of an Anglo-German détente became too much for Saunders. He drew Chirol's attention to the German attitude as he saw it from Berlin. "Why is it (forgive me)," he asked, "that in Lord Salisbury's public speeches I find whole sentences proclaiming our friend-ship with Germany and in The Times leaders the same thing asserted, while here I find Anglo-German relations cautiously dismissed in public by Bülow in one word," i.e., "normal." And this was a month before the Kaiser's visit. Saunders declared that he could not bring himself

to indulge in vague generalities about "identity of German and British aims in the Far East" and the like. That is precisely what the Germans would like the whole English Press to do, while their own Press carefully distinguishes where Germany can act with England and where her own ulterior motives restrict this cooperation. To refuse to welcome Bülow's clever proposal would be sheer folly. To base upon it far-reaching anticipations of Anglo-German cooperation throughout the world would only show that we are as "gullible" as the Germans believe us to be.

While this correspondence was proceeding the German Foreign Office was becoming alarmed concerning the repercussions of Saunders's telegrams upon British public opinion. Early in November, Holstein made a strong complaint against the

The following indicates the vehemence of Chirol's feeling about France on the eve of the South African war: "I hope you will keep your eye on any interesting comments on the Dreyfus sentence. I fear there is no doubt possible as to what the sentence will be. It is awful—monstrously awful. Surely even from the most selfish point of view the Russians must recoil at this demoralisation of their 'ally'." Chirol to Dobson in St. Petersburg, September 7, 1899. (F. 4/438.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Saunders to Chirol, November 10, 1899. (P.H.S.)

SAUNDERS AN "OBSTACLE" TO ANGLO-GERMAN AMITY

messages of the Correspondent. He was, apparently, not prepared to advocate his deportation and it is not clear whether it was at his suggestion that the Wilhelmstrasse acted. The move has the appearance of being hurried. Bülow thus instructed Hatzfeldt, the Ambassador:

A not unimportant obstacle to the improvement of Anglo-German feeling is the present Times correspondent, Saunders. Twice or three times a week he collects bitter criticisms of England and sends them to London, omitting to say that they always come from agrarian and other trouble-making papers, i.e., those that hate their own Government more than England, and hope thus to make difficulties for it. But the British Press describes these utterances as though they came from "authoritative sources," and The Times writes sour leading articles, which are answered from here in the same tone. It may go on for a long time like this if Saunders remains here. I have already told you that Saunders's statements show that he is a personal opponent of Chamberlain. It is Chamberlain's business to remove the cause if his policy is incommoded by it. It has needed good nerves and strong determination to keep German policy consistently free from all anti-British ties, in spite of the constant discouragement offered by England's policy, Press, and people.

I cannot see that it will do harm to bring the contents of this simple statement to Chamberlain's knowledge in undiluted form as far as possible.<sup>1</sup>

This dispatch was forwarded on November 15, 1899. Four days later William II arrived in England. Political conversations took place between Bülow and British statesmen. Among the topics discussed with Balfour were Anglo-German relations in general. Obstacles to the development of friendship between the two peoples were deplored. The Press was an evil. In The Times, for instance, said Bülow, Saunders "was amusing himself by collecting every attack on England from the most obscure German papers and laying them before the British public every morning. This tendentious method of reporting made it very difficult for us to keep up the good relations with England which were desired on many sides." Balfour, according to Bülow, expressed his readiness to try whether it was not possible to effect a change in the representation of The Times in Berlin. That, in fact, he did "try", nowhere appears, but it is highly likely that Balfour, who regularly saw Buckle, mentioned the matter to him. Doubtless, too, Buckle would have reminded Balfour that correspondents had the liberty to express their view of the passing situation. There never was the slightest chance that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bülow to Hatzfeldt, November 15, 1899. (G.P. XV, 412; Dugdale III, 107-8.)

The Times would be influenced to recall a Correspondent at the request of a Foreign Power. Some at least of Holstein's subordinates, if not he himself, might have learnt from Chirol or Saunders that The Times had never removed a correspondent upon a political complaint, made directly or indirectly by a Government. Even when the office had reasons of its own for appointing a Correspondent elsewhere he was never disturbed to please the Government of the country. In the nineties The Times correspondent at Constantinople could not be moved simply because the Turkish Government were continually asking for his transfer.1 The leading articles expressing the view of The Times might sound a different note. This was the case in 1899. Unlike Saunders, Chirol believed that a settlement of the outstanding differences between Britain and Germany could be made. What might separate the two countries was not public opinion or the Press, but, in Chirol's view, the Government. As a former diplomat he was, perhaps, apt to exaggerate the significance of diplomacy. Indeed, so ready was Chirol to believe that a purely diplomatic solution would remove obstacles in the way of Anglo-German understanding that at the beginning of November he wished to prune a dispatch from Lavino, who had been sent to The Hague Conference, and thus justified his action:

I certainly have no a priori belief in the sincerity of German policy, and you doubtless have excellent reasons for doubting it at the present moment. But the information we have here does not point in that direction. The tone of the German Press remains indeed unfriendly, though markedly less so than a fortnight ago. But the language of the Emperor and of the German Government and the official attitude generally are not only not unfriendly, but quite the reverse, and one must acknowledge that, in coming here just now, the Emperor is taking a very unpopular step in the discharge of a duty of courtesy from which he might well have excused himself, and this imposes upon us the obligation to treat him in the same spirit.<sup>2</sup>

While this was undoubtedly a reasonable view for the leading articles of *The Times* to adopt, it was, in Chirol's case, more than that. It cannot be doubted that at the time this was Chirol's personal, honest, and firm conviction. The Berlin and Vienna Correspondents were alone in holding that a deeply hostile German public opinion necessarily interposed an insuperable obstacle to close diplomatic Anglo-German relations.

Bülow, therefore, was badly misguided and very ungrateful to Chirol when he described the leading articles as "sour."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bell to Stillman, April 27, 1896. (M.B.B./854.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Chirol to Lavino, November 3, 1899. (F. 4/477.)

#### THE TIMES AGAINST A GERMAN ALLIANCE

Probably he was misinformed by Holstein and thought that Saunders's messages were dictated by the office. If Britain could not entertain the idea of an alliance with Germany, the Emperor's forthcoming visit was welcomed with the greatest cordiality, and the conduct in general of the German Government was highly praised. Chirol's view that Anglo-German differences concerned only minor points and that these could easily be and ought to be settled was expressed on several occasions. The Emperor's actual arrival was heralded in *The Times*, perhaps as a warning also to Chamberlain, by a frank recognition that England needed no general engagements with Germany. (November 20.)

Salisbury, who had that week been bereaved of his wife, resigned most of the political conversations to Chamberlain. He and Bülow talked in detail about colonial policy. Conversations upon other topics were also held, with Balfour in attendance. While the Kaiser and his party were at Windsor, Bülow, in a dispatch to the Chancellor, described his impressions:

The British politicians know little of the Continent. Many of them do not know much more of Continental circumstances than we do of the conditions in Peru or Siam. They are also, according to our ideas, rather naive in their artless egotism, as well as a certain blind confidence. They find difficulty in believing in really evil intentions in others; they are very calm, very phlegmatic, very optimistic. The South African War excites the people of Berlin more than it does London political circles. 1

The British, if not as ignorant as the Kaiser and Bülow would have it, were at least of optimistic temperament and indisposed to think evil. These amiable weaknesses, it was quickly appreciated by Bülow and others, would be a prime source of strength to German policy. They so remained for the whole period from the date of the first Navy Bill of 1898, the second Bill of 1900, and that of the Kiel Canal widening in 1906. It was the period during which the Germans, as Tirpitz warned his people in 1898, needed as the "most important political object to gain time to build our fleet." This time, until it was gained, constituted for Germany a "danger period." During the ten years from 1898 to 1908, Britain, with or without a colonial war on her hands, was strong enough easily to destroy the entire German navy. In 1899 the "danger period" had only been in progress a few months. Bülow was extremely sensitive to the dangers

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bülow to Hohenlohe, November 24, 1899. (Bülow, *Memoirs*, II, 332; G.P. XV, 413; Dugdale III, 108.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Tirpitz, Memoirs, I, 169.

of the situation, and herein lay the reason for his anxiety to be rid of Saunders. "In general, there is no question that the feeling in Britain is much less anti-German than the feeling in Germany is anti-British"—so, while still in England, he reported to Prince Hohenlohe. His next paragraph added the explicit statement that "if the British public clearly realized the anti-British feeling which dominates Germany just now, a great revulsion would occur in its conception of the relations between Britain and Germany." This, it has been seen, was precisely what Saunders did realize, was reporting, and would continue to report. If his dispatches were not given much attention at home their significance was by no means minimized by the Germans. Bülow in the same paragraph insisted to Hohenlohe that "those Englishmen who, like Chirol and Saunders, knew from personal observation the acuteness and depth of Germany's unfortunate dislike of Britain, are the most dangerous to us." The inclusion of Chirol was hardly intelligent. Holstein and Bülow, knowing nothing of the simple workings of The Times, may have imagined that, as in the German Press. Saunders, as Chirol's subordinate, wrote as directed. Space need not be wasted in dilating upon the conduct of a Minister who, at the very time he was writing to Hohenlohe in the terms above quoted, was pressing Balfour to bring about a change of representation of The Times in Berlin on account of the alleged "virulent anti-Germanism" of Saunders. It is, however, essential to realize that Chirol was responsible for the foreign policy of The Times and that the paper, while not supporting an alliance, placed its influence behind that portion of Chamberlain's programme which was based upon a hoped for understanding with Germany.1 Chirol was satisfied that both Powers had common interests and that the increase of the German fleet was no bar to friendly relations with Britain.

At the Kaiser's departure on the 30th The Times lauded the tact and delicacy of the Emperor's bearing towards the Queen and Sovereign. The leading article lavished praise upon the German Sovereign "who had proved himself to be more farsighted than his people." On the same day, Chamberlain's speech at Leicester was reported. He advocated, as he was entitled to believe, at Bülow's request, an explicit German understanding, based on his opinion that "we should not remain permanently isolated on the Continent of Europe; and I think that the moment that aspiration was formed it must have appeared

<sup>1</sup> Chamberlain's policy from the beginning, says Garvin (I, 500), was a fundamental "Either-Or." It was his belief that Britain should either settle with Germany or with France and Russia.

### CHAMBERLAIN'S LEICESTER SPEECH

evident to everybody that there was a natural alliance between ourselves and Germany."

Such a show of cordiality from the one British statesman upon whose shoulders the Germans were accustomed to place responsibility for a colonial war, which they regarded as infamous in origin and rapacious in object, was totally unexpected. The Leicester speech had an exceedingly bad press all over Germany. Notwithstanding, it was the view of Chirol and Saunders that the speech was by no means displeasing to the Kaiser and to Bülow. Certainly it proved to the private delight of Bülow that Britain was not anti-German and was not, as some Germans fancied, going to prepare anything like a preventive war. It soon became clear from German popular reactions that no business of the kind that Bülow had encouraged Chamberlain to try for could be effected until after the lapse of a considerable space of time. Whatever the view of the Kaiser it was plain that an understanding with England would be too unpopular to be risked. A semi-official announcement printed in the Hamburgischer Korrespondent was handed to Reuter in order to prevent misunderstanding on the point. The announcement stated positively that there existed no general and secret compact between Germany and Britain which could be called an alliance. Saunders's judgment, expressed in a private letter, was that this meant that the German Government would wait until the Reich was stronger and Britain relatively weaker before they pressed for an alliance. It was only then that the highest terms for Germany could be extorted from the British Empire.1

It was precisely this "old hatred of England" that was so useful to have circulated in Germany, but was so embarrassing to the Kaiser and Bülow when Saunders advertised it in England. Their first satisfaction at Chamberlain's speech was natural: they desired no immediate trouble with an England overpowering in the home seas and elsewhere. Chamberlain thought Britain's eastern position was so far from strong that help was necessary. That was one of his chief reasons for turning to Germany now that war had come to South Africa. But Chamberlain had little or no idea of the extent to which jealousy of England was current in Germany even before the Boer war. Although his Leicester speech did not fail to take explicit notice of German Press abuse, the essence of his argument was that the German Press misrepresented the German public. This was what Balfour had been told by Bülow. He

<sup>1</sup> Saunders to Chirol, December 8, 1899.

had laid upon Saunders the "blame" for any "mischief" that might be done to Anglo-German relations by his dispatches to *The Times*. There can be no doubt that had it been possible the German Government would have prevented any knowledge of the depth of the German popular resentment from being known and understood in England. As it was they were careful not to hand on to the semi-official German Press Agency the resolutions passed at anti-British meetings. The final conclusion of the Germans was that, despite Saunders, despite *The Times*, the true feelings of the German people were not yet known in Britain to any inconvenient extent.

When, therefore, instead of making the slightest move against the German navy, Chamberlain suggested an "alliance," it was natural for Bülow to congratulate himself. The Leicester speech was proof positive that Chamberlain was genuinely exercised concerning Russian designs in China and elsewhere. This view of Russia was that commonly accepted in England. Wallace was pro-Russian; Saunders was the same; so was Lavino. But they were by no means typical of British opinion. The general conception of British policy was based upon the possession of an "understanding," if not an "alliance," with Germany as necessary for the better protection of British interests in the Far East and in the Persian Gulf. That, for Bülow, was the meaning of Chamberlain's speech and that was what he gathered at Windsor when he took part in talks on the subject with what Chamberlain regarded as genuine sympathy. For that "understanding" and a policy based upon it Chirol continued to stand, and The Times to argue.

Three weeks after the Leicester speech it fell to Bülow to introduce the second Navy Bill. He felt strong enough to take a very definite line and his speech created a sensation. "In the coming century, the German nation will be either the hammer or the anvil"; so, adapting some words of Goethe's, Bülow told the Reichstag on December 11. The speech had the effect of alienating the warmest advocate in England of an Anglo-German "alliance." It did not so much displease The Times, which had never desired it. "Count von Bülow," said a leading article published next day, "is not very warm in his references to the British Government and its policy, but he is absolutely 'correct,' and we want nothing more." Another point is noteworthy. Bülow's speech has been read, not without justice, by later writers as a violently jingo utterance; The Times, on December 12,

<sup>1</sup> Chamberlain discussed an "alliance" with the Kaiser on November 24, 1899. (Garvin, III, 501.)

#### EFFECTS OF GERMAN PRO-BOERISM

1899, stated that he rebuffed the German jingoes and picked out for emphasis the most pacific passages in his speech. It was not then known that the Reichstag speech postponed indefinitely the kind of Anglo-German rapprochement that The Times saw as desirable and practicable.

For the paper of December 27 Flanagan<sup>1</sup> was instructed to study German Anglophobia from the text that "the marked change for the better in the tone of the German official and semi-official Press" afforded "a favourable opportunity for a dispassionate inquiry." He traced to their sources the hostile opinions of several classes of Germans and, without taking too serious a view of the matter, observed that these conclusions "may prevent impulsive philo-Teutons from drawing extravagant inferences from the satisfactory business arrangements we from time to time conclude with the German Government." The article also said, what was doubtless true, that "we have been accustomed to look upon Germans and Germany with friendliness, and most of us have fancied that our attitude was generally reciprocated." The article was incomplete since no deprecation was admitted of the sort of criticism made in sections of English journalism that infuriated Germans. It was not very considerable in volume but the Germans, as the Kaiser truly pointed out to Chamberlain, were "sensitive, obstinate, sentimental, and touchy." No reference was made to the fact that expressions of British good will towards Germany arose from the hope, understandable in time of war, that Germany would "stay put."

The year 1900 opened quietly in Europe. Chirol held, generally speaking, to the line he had laid down in 1899. Saunders, for his part, continued to assume that Germany would thwart British policy unless it served her own. He was prone to overlook the fact that the Boers had support in every country in Europe. With his own best friends serving in the war, Saunders felt acutely the accusations of military cowardice daily served up in the German Press. Below the surface there was abundant material for serious Anglo-German friction. Britain, for all her reverses, was in most confident mood. As Bülow said, "the country exhales wealth, comfort, content, and confidence in its own power and future." Saunders still wished to stack rifles in Pretoria; Chirol was keen on maintaining a foothold in China but his feeling in favour of the Germans gradually lessened as their Press continued to attack Britain and singled out Saunders for personal abuse.

<sup>1</sup> The leader-writer. See p. 25 for his articles on "Parnellism and Crime."

The Kölnische Zeitung, whose foreign policy was influenced by an intimate of Holstein's, Justizrat Fischer, 1 paid great attention to The Times. Saunders could not neglect a paper with such close relations with the Foreign Office. He pounced upon its efforts to make capital out of England's difficulties. In January, 1900 discussing the war losses in South Africa, the Kölnische Zeitung remarked that, in the case of an ultimate Boer victory it was understood that Germany reserved her right to enforce her interests in accordance with her international position. Saunders's dispatch stated that the last sentence was doubtless the main issue of the whole article, and that it would be important to know whether the article was semi-official or not. Somewhat subdued, the Kölnische Zeitung retreated, observing that the sentence had been in fact, semi-official, but that, for the time being, the paper was of the opinion that it was not in the German interest to allow destruction of English power in any part of the world whatever. Saunders' correspondence of this period includes many examples of this kind of polemic.2 Such press discussions increased the suspicion of the office that German policy was, as Saunders contended, basically hostile. Chirol was in process of being converted by the facts to believe in a coming struggle between Germany and Britain.

There were other reasons for a stiffening in Chirol's attitude. The first was an affair of contraband. It was an incident of the sort that always occurs between belligerents and neutrals where sea-power is a vital factor. That a German liner should be carried off to the Durban prize court upon information that proved to be false, as the *Bundesrath* was on January 2, obviously made good material for the German naval party. Yet so late as January 9, 1900, *The Times* was congratulating the two Powers on the calmness prevailing and went on to discuss Anglo-German relations in general. It made its own the statement printed in Saunders's telegram to the effect that

German ambitions might ultimately conflict with those of Great Britain [this in itself was more than *The Times* was prepared to print

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cf. Oskar Hammann, Zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges (Berlin, 1919), p. 100. Hammann, who was in a position to know the facts, says that Holstein saw with regularity only Chirol, Fischer and later Schiemann. At what time Holstein cut Saunders is not clear. According to Baron von Rosen, Bülow told him that "For a long time, Holstein was on very intimate terms with Chirol until one day when suddenly all was finished. With Saunders, he did the same; at first, he was a very intimate friend in the house of Mrs. Hainauer, Saunders' mother-in-law, and then suddenly, he broke off all relations with him." This was probably before November 1901. Cf. Rosen, Aus einem diplomatischen Wanderleben, I, 89.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For a German view of the exchanges between *The Times* and the Kölnische Zeitung see Joh. Lehmann, Die Aussenpolitik und die "Kölnische Zeitung" während der Bülowzeit. (Berlin, 1937.)

#### CHIROL HARDENS AGAINST BÜLOW

in November]...but...German statesmen do not try to do the work of their grandsons...Englishmen...will on the one hand learn not to attach too much importance to calculated encouragement of apparently uncontrollable popular sentiment [a hint that Saunders's views were beginning to prevail] and will note how ruthlessly such sentiment is blighted when it seems likely to go too far. On the other hand, they will not fall into the error, of which we recently had a rather conspicuous example, of exaggerating the value and importance of agreements with Germany on special points, which do not imply anything beyond the contents of the agreements themselves.

Clearly the undertone is strongly critical of Germany. It became much more so when the *Bundesrath* affair, still unsettled, was taken by Bülow as the justification for a threatening speech in the Reichstag. Chirol felt very deeply, and never forgot or forgave, the offensiveness of Bülow's tone. He expressed in a leader of January 20 the surprise and regret caused in Britain by his language. *The Times* felt bound to observe that "it may not be wise to push too far the practice of exploiting international questions of a delicate character, even for the furtherance of a big navy Bill." Bülow had certainly overplayed his hand.

Simultaneously, a second incident hardened Chirol's suspicions against Germany. Sir Edmund Monson, Ambassador in Paris. reported to Lord Salisbury a curious story from Blowitz that had come to him. He had in recent months been hoaxed and had telegraphed to London sensational intelligence which had proved to be utterly unfounded. Monson repeated this by way of historical preamble. Hence he naturally pressed for information as to his sources. The information concerned secret negotiations between France, Germany, and Russia to take advantage of British difficulties. Blowitz would reveal only that his informant was a politician of eminence who had obtained his information directly from Loubet, Waldeck-Rousseau, Delcassé, and De l'Ormesson. Monson was inclined towards doubt. France, he was sure, would only act under the influence of the "most urgent and forcible prompting of a Foreign Power" and as Russia did not want a crisis, any such Foreign Power could only be Germany. 1 What Monson did not believe is now known to have possessed considerable substance. There is no doubt that Blowitz was justified in retailing his story. Chirol was strongly inclined to believe it, for a story from another source came to him in the same month.

The new case was different. Towards the end of January the German representative at Washington seemed to be trying to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Monson to Salisbury, January 19, 1900. (G. and T. II, 247.)

secure American intervention in the South African War. John Hay, the U.S. Secretary of State, one of the architects of the policy of Anglo-American friendship, was not prepared to do anything of the kind. Chirol had long been a close friend of Spring Rice, who was intimate with Hay and who disclosed some of the facts to Chirol. Later, the Germans, failing to move Hay, sought indirectly to influence the President. Chirol thereupon wrote to Smalley, *The Times* correspondent in Washington:

We have received authentic information from a confidential source that the German Embassy at Washington is trying to work the German element in the States in order to put pressure on the President to elicit from him some act or expression of opinion in connexion with the war which would alienate British good feeling, and undo the progress made during the last two years towards a friendly understanding between England and America. Would you kindly let us have any information you can obtain bearing upon this point?

Chirol proceeded to express a reluctant conclusion that there was nothing more to be done with Germany:

I am afraid there is no longer any room to doubt the profound hostility and duplicity of Germany. She will not commit herself openly against us, but in every direction she is doing her best to obstruct and thwart us. Bülow's speech was most offensive and has finally dispelled the optimism which still lingered here in official quarters. Bülow claims to have revived the great Bismarckian tradition, but I fancy he has inherited only the worst features of that tradition.<sup>1</sup>

One of the features of the Bismarckian tradition, which Chirol correctly saw Bülow to be busy reviving, was the trick of playing off Great Britain against Russia. On this matter a clear warning was given by The Times to the Germans. An article on Russia and Persia (February 5) concluded with a word of advice in Chirol's most provoking manner "to our German friends." After mentioning Bismarck's creation of an Anglo-Russian incident in 1870, it observed that there was "this difference... between Prince Bismarck and Count von Bülow that the old Chancellor knew how to keep the secrets of his diplomatic strategy to himself. He was content to achieve his objects without allowing his Press to betray them by a premature revelation of his methods." It was the sort of comparison that, offered publicly in print, was calculated to irritate to the maximum, not only Bülow, but Holstein and the other anti-Bismarckians in the German Foreign Office.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chirol to Smalley, January 23, 1900. (F. 4/502.)

#### ECKARDSTEIN AND CHIROL

A month later Chirol agreed with Saunders regarding British relations with Russia and France that:

we should not allow them to be wirepulled by Berlin. I think we gave a very clear indication of that in our leader of February 5 on "Russia and Persia" in the last paragraph. The Germans have yet to realize the full effect produced in this country—I believe on the Man in the Cabinet as well as on the Man in the Street—by their attitude towards us during the last three months.<sup>1</sup>

On February 16 The Times annoyed the Germans by discussing an alleged desire of theirs to get hold of the Dutch colonies, of which a German newspaper had published a hint in circumstances that convinced The Times of its official inspiration. Finally on March 3, when President McKinley had made an effort at intervention, Germany's trouble-making activities were explicitly mentioned in The Times. The paper said it had reason to believe that the German-American agitation was stimulated by short-sighted politicians in Germany to whom the Anglo-American understanding was a bugbear.

The Times worked actively in other directions to prevent McKinley's action leading to friction between Great Britain and the United States. Admittedly for reasons of discretion, Chirol pruned Smalley's telegrams. "Your criticism is unquestionably legitimate," but, Chirol asked him, "is it not more politic to refrain from it? It seems to me that by displaying irritation we should only be playing into the hands of those who want to irritate us."<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile Freiherr von Eckardstein, of the London Embassy, was courting Chirol. He was not the most tactful of diplomatists but he was full of perseverance. He enjoyed a wide acquaintance with London society and occasionally talked politics with Lansdowne and Chamberlain. The memorandum of an interview with Chirol in January reads ironically when it is understood that Chirol had been convinced against his will of German duplicity:

I had yesterday a long interview with Mr. Chirol of *The Times*. He is still of opinion that, with very few exceptions, the tone of the German Press towards England is more violent and virulent than that of the French and Russian Papers, and that the caricatures of the Queen and Prince of Wales in the German comics are worse than the French.

I pointed out as evidence to the contrary that only a few German papers were violent, and that the Kölnische Zeitung, the Post and many

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Saunders, March 5, 1900. (F. 4/515.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Chirol to Smalley, March 16, 1900. (F. 4/523.)

others were quite friendly; and that German public opinion was by no means so hostile as might be thought. I made a particular point of the friendly attitude of the German Government, to which England owed the localization of the war in South Africa. This last point appeared to surprise him, for he said that so far as he could see the German Government had been very cool and unfriendly to England, as was suggested by the speeches of the Foreign Secretary. I tried to controvert him in this also, but he insisted that both the official policy and the public opinion of Germany were thoroughly unfriendly. In doing so he made the following remark: "The British public never expected very much from France and Russia, but, after the Imperial visit and the hearty reception given the Kaiser, we expected better things of Germany. It is a question whether it would not be preferable to join with open enemies like France and Russia, even at the greatest sacrifice, than with a double-faced friend like Germany."

I enclose herewith a letter from Chirol.

Would it not be possible to circulate in the German Press, through Wolff, a strongly worded *démenti* as to the reported behaviour of British troops in Natal. Mr. Chirol seemed to be very excited about the repeated calumnies in the German Press as to the excesses of the British troops. I think it would be of use.<sup>1</sup>

The effect of the London diplomat's report, upon Holstein, already disposed to place upon Chirol all the blame for the attitude of *The Times*, was instant. He at once instructed Eckardstein:

Chirol seems to me so arrogant that I think it is not consonant with our dignity to go on running after him. It will be quite enough if you can keep touch with such papers as are less supercilious towards Germany. The English will need us more than we do them for some time to come; for, even if they succeed in holding the Boer Republics as conquered territory, our attitude will mean a good deal to them.<sup>2</sup>

The "running after" Chirol had perhaps been done with less skill than the enterprise demanded. It would not be easy to "nobble" such a man. But Holstein did not let the "supercilious" journal alone. Other methods were to be adopted towards *The Times*. Now, as previously, the line taken was to make veiled threats to the British Government concerning the paper. On March 3 the Kaiser wrote direct to "My Dear Sir Frank" informing Lascelles that the Russian plan for a joint Russo-French-German intervention in the Boer War was not going to have his support. On the 7th, Count Metternich.

<sup>2</sup> Holstein to Eckardstein, March 3, 1900; ib. 141.

<sup>1</sup> Eckardstein: Ten Years at the Court of St. James' (1921), pp. 140-1.

#### A MISTAKE IN THE TIMES

the German Chargé d'Affaires in London, told Bülow of Lord Salisbury's gratitude. This dispatch was received by Holstein who thus minuted it:

It must permanently injure Sir Frank Lascelles' position with His Majesty if the Emperor sees in what tone *The Times*, which is directed by Lascelles' friend, Chirol, and Saunders, who is in almost daily touch with Lascelles, continues to write. As I do not know Lascelles, I cannot judge whether a warning would be useful.

To this Bülow added the words:

Agree entirely; will refer to it when I next see Lascelles.1

It was the Kaiser, however, who had resolved to take a direct hand. He found his pretext a fortnight later. On March 16 he wired to Lascelles from Kiel that "the tone of recent articles in The Times exceeds all bounds, and after insulting me, they have gone so far as to publish a report that the crew of my brother's flagship on their departure from Portsmouth, had cheered the Boers." The sailors, in fact, said the Kaiser, were giving farewell cheers to British bluejackets; the report was an "arrant lie" which was the more to be regretted if, in reply to the hard work he had undertaken at home to restrain attacks on Britain, The Times "should have inoculated their pens with fresh venom against Germany." The Kaiser concluded by saying that "Disaster may come of it if this is not stopped at once." The Ambassador could only reply that Lord Salisbury would doubtless deplore the tone of The Times, but that Her Majesty's Government exercised no sort of control over the newspaper. Salisbury duly regretted the incidents referred to, as being "most unfortunate; but the vagaries of newspapers are entirely beyond my control."2

The "tone" which the Kaiser disliked in the first instance was that of Chirol's leader in *The Times* of March 15, on the published correspondence between the two countries on the *Bundesrath* and similar incidents. The second point of offence was the publication in the same issue of a letter to the Editor from Captain H. H. Grenfell, R.N., retired, who reported that the *Deutschland's* crew, when ending the shore leave, "gave three cheers for the Boer Republics" while "under the eye of their own officers." As printed, the letter was signed "Captain, R.N." On the 17th, Count Metternich informed the Editor in a published letter that inquiries he had made "at official quarters" satisfied him that the German sailors were

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> G.P. XV, 521; Dugdale III, 124. <sup>2</sup> G. and T. I, March 18, 1900, 255.

escorted to the *Deutschland* by British sailors with whom they exchanged cheers. The Count's letter drew from Captain Grenfell a complete withdrawal, which was published on March 29. The Editor added a note expressing regret that Captain Grenfell's original letter was published in *The Times* and the incident dropped. *The Times* was wrong and admitted it.

Nevertheless, the front towards Germany was soon stern enough. Chirol's opinions had now been completely reversed. His conversion to Saunders's view that a conflict between Britain and Germany was inevitable was complete. Whereas in the previous November he had written privately that the German Press was not so bad as the French, and the German Government much more correct; now the French Press was much the better of the two, and the French Government the more correct. These sentiments found their way into leading articles, which even began to hint at the possibility of an Anglo-French understanding. On March 12, The Times, referring to our cross-channel neighbours, condemned what it called "a good deal of silly talk"... "We have no quarrel with" the French and a war would be ruinous to both, the only party to gain would be the tertius gaudens. The attitude of the French Government was not only "correct" but showed in its friendship a contrast to other Powers. This contrast was driven home strikingly by a leading article two days later, in which the language used by the German Government, as revealed by the Bundesrath Blue Book, was severely criticized and the conclusion drawn that no longer could "the false delusion" be cherished of the "correctness" of the Germans.

Such straight talk to the Germans was not to the taste of the British Diplomatic service. Soon after the Kaiser's complaint, Sir Thomas Sanderson, Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had an interview with Chirol of which the content is lacking but its tenor may be guessed from the dispatch of March 24 in which Count Metternich informed Berlin that Baron Rothschild had confidentially informed him that after a Cabinet Meeting which discussed the attitude of the paper a Minister had asked him to use his (Rothschild's) influence with The Times and that he was going to read Buckle a lesson.<sup>1</sup>

Comparison of the tone of *The Times* before and after the date in question is made difficult by the fact that shortly after March 18

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Metternich to Foreign Office, March 24, 1900; G.P. XV, 493; Metternich reports that Sir Thomas Sanderson also saw Chirol and that a complete change in the attitude of the paper resulted. It will be seen that nothing of the kind occurred.

#### ATTACKS ON SAUNDERS

Chirol went on sick leave and did not return until the beginning of May. But there is not the slightest reason to suppose that *The Times* would have modified its line of criticism in response to any admonitions from Lord Rothschild. In Chirol's absence, Germany almost dropped out of the news, and in spite of such incidents as an ugly Anglophobe incident at Dresden, a rumoured German-American attempt to intervene, &c., the leader columns ignored Anglo-German relations.

Chirol at P.H.S. was naturally in a good position to look after himself. Saunders at Berlin bore unflinchingly the brunt of local resentment. Attacks on him in the Press, deluges of anonymous letters and postcards in no way weakened his nerve. The evidence of this hostility that he sent to the office confirmed the authorities in the view that the correspondent was doing his duty. In March, 1900, Chirol assured Saunders that the attacks "only serve to enhance our appreciation of the ability and courage you have shown in placing before the British public facts with which it was of the highest importance it should be made acquainted." Bell expressed himself to the same effect and sent Saunders a letter of special commendation for his work "under circumstances of peculiar difficulty."

With such assurances of support Saunders stood firm while world developments continued to inflame international antagonisms. Britain annexed the Tonga Islands on May 19 and the Orange Free State on May 24, 1900. On June 20 the Boxers murdered the German Ambassador. On July 27 the Kaiser made his "Huns" speech at Bremerhaven to the German retributive expedition. Britain annexed the Transvaal on September 1. Russia in the meantime was completing her occupation of Manchuria while the Germans were laying down at Kiao-Chow the base for an Asiatic German Empire. The Germans already possessed great commercial interests at Colombo, Singapore and Hong-kong and at the end of the year Count Waldersee commanded in the East a force of 25,000 Germans and a naval force in Chinese Waters stronger than our own. The Anglo-German agreement over China, in the circumstances of the rate of German expansion in the Far East, was a further cause of disquiet to Saunders.

Simultaneously, the German officials were correct enough to the correspondent. The official attitude towards him in public was very different from that maintained behind the scenes in the Wilhelmstrasse during the past twelve months or more.

In April of the previous year. White, the American Ambassador very guardedly told the correspondent that the Kaiser had been talking about "Saunders's telegrams." Six months later the correspondent reported to Amery, acting in the absence of Chirol who had left for the Far East, that the civility of the German Foreign Office "is alarming." The Germans, he warned the office towards the end of 1900, "remained the only nation which intelligently and of set purpose contemplates a struggle with Great Britain for commercial and colonial predominance."3 The obstinate fact was that in spite of the Wilhelmstrasse's "alarming "civility to Saunders, the anti-English tone of the German Press did not slacken. In 1901 Saunders had the same story to tell: "the anti-English tendencies have acquired such strength that they carry everything away with them and cannot be stopped at a moment's notice." In the spring the imminence of a Russo-Japanese conflict led Lansdowne to sound the German willingness to make a joint declaration with England that the two Powers would observe neutrality so long as no other European Power intervened. Lansdowne was now to some extent aware of the extent of anti-English feeling in Germany. Nevertheless, he was willing to discuss a defensive "alliance" with the Germans and talked in that sense to Hatzfeldt.

As the year made progress, so did the talk, in certain quarters, of an "alliance." The Boer War and Britain's situation in the East brought the risk of isolation closer to the minds of some British statesmen. Chamberlain and his friends watched the strategical position of these islands with increasing anxiety. He was more than ever sure that it was not healthy for Britain to stand alone. It might be worth while making one more effort to come to terms with Germany.

<sup>1</sup> Saunders to Chirol, April 8, 1899.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Saunders to Amery, September 22, 1899.

<sup>3</sup> Saunders to Amery, November 3, 1900.

<sup>4</sup> Saunders's message, February 9, 1901.

# XII

# THE END OF BRITISH ISOLATION

UEEN VICTORIA's death on January 22, 1901, and the succession of King Edward, together with the Kaiser's visit to his grandmother's death-bed, afforded an excellent diplomatic opportunity for the reconsideration of Anglo-German relations as a whole. Salisbury, it was known, continued to hold to "splendid isolation." The discussions that, since 1898, Eckardstein, acting in the place of Hatzfeldt, had with Chamberlain were widely comprehensive though they were also secret and non-committal.

A new stage in unofficial discussion began at Chatsworth when, in January, 1901, Chamberlain and the Duke of Devonshire admitted to Eckardstein that "splendid isolation" was a thing of the past. Primarily, our eastern situation, since the Japanese victory over China in 1894, had altered. The Germans were well aware of that factor in the situation. In February. when Lansdowne asked Eckardstein whether Germany would ioin Great Britain and Japan in checking Russian aggression in China, the German Government declined to act without substantial securities and compensations. On March 18 Lansdowne had a conversation with Eckardstein, who talked about an "alliance." As Salisbury was ill, Lansdowne was unable to return an answer. In the meantime Holstein wired to Eckardstein on March 17 expressly forbidding him to mention the word "alliance" and warned him that the overture for it must come from the British side.

Holstein's statement of March 27, 1901, addressed to Bülow (who rated it as a "masterly memorandum, with which I agree at all points") lays it down that from his point of view "all would be different if England would make up her mind to join the Triple Alliance, and if Japan came in also as a pendant to England." This, then, was the official and definite attitude of the German Foreign Office. Further, Bülow and Holstein both believed that Britain's situation would, sooner or later, induce

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Holstein, Dugdale III, 140; G.P. XVI, 350.

# THE END OF BRITISH ISOLATION

her to make an overture which would lay the basis for a firm "alliance" on the only, and closely articulated, terms that they would accept. They, therefore, had only to wait upon events, sit tight and, in the meantime, see that the British were kept in the right mood.

Eckardstein may or may not have appreciated the attitude of his superiors. There is some indication that he thought the influence of the Kaiser might be brought to bear in a direction favourable to the conclusion of some sort of "alliance," not necessarily firm or definite in character. On April 9 Eckardstein called on Lansdowne to say that he believed that the time had again become opportune to discuss the question of an "alliance," and Lansdowne again regretted that he could report no progress until Salisbury's return. It was understood, Lansdowne was reminded, that all that had passed was unofficial and that it must not be supposed that the Emperor knew all about the communication Eckardstein was now making. The Chargé d'Affaires then alleged that what had been done was, in fact, done with the knowledge of persons." very near the Emperor" and who had means of judging H.I.M.'s ideas. In reporting the conversation to Lascelles, Lansdowne said that Eckardstein "mentioned Holstein (have I spelt it right?) as one of these persons." Lansdowne's own opinion in April remained sceptical: "[I] doubt whether much will come of this project. In principle the idea is good enough, but when each side comes, if it ever does, to formulate its terms, we shall break down; and I know Lord Salisbury regards the scheme with, to say the least, suspicion."2

When the Prime Minister was back, Lansdowne sent him a note, and on May 30 Hatzfeldt, who had also returned from an illness, replied negatively to Lansdowne's request for something in writing. The idea of setting out concrete proposals at this stage disturbed the Wilhelmstrasse. Holstein held fast to the line that since an Anglo-German "alliance" would expose the Reich to an attack by Russia, she should receive due compensation which England would give when her situation became difficult. The Foreign Secretary's determination to extract a written statement coincided with a genuine worsening of Hatzfeldt's health. He had evidently shown too much keenness and thus had reversed the plan of the Wilhelmstrasse by placing Germany in the position of a suppliant. England must make the overture and the offer. Lansdowne acknowledged to Lascelles that he was quite ready to "mark time for a while." It would be easier to examine

<sup>1</sup> Lansdowne to Lascelles, April 13, 1901. (G. and T. II, 63.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lansdowne to Lascelles, April 13, 1901. (G. and T. II, 63.)

#### OFFICE IGNORANCE OF ANGLO-GERMAN TALKS

the question when Hatzfeldt had left. It is convenient, therefore, to regard Hatzfeldt's recall as symbolizing in the minds of Lansdowne and of Bülow the end of the negotiations.

In August, when the King met the Kaiser at Wilhelmshöhe, he did so knowing that the Czar, due immediately in Paris, had arranged to see William on the way home. Already, too, Chamberlain had told Alfred Rothschild in June that the Germans were short-sighted; and when the Kaiser, while expressing dissatisfaction that nothing definite had been done regarding an "alliance," maintained the Wilhelmstrasse's terms of including Britain in the Triple Alliance, little hope of business was entertained in London. Lascelles explained to the Kaiser that he had Bülow's assurance that there was no necessity for haste and that the Triple Alliance was the pivot of German policy. In fact it would appear that by August serious talk about an "alliance" had faded out. Anything further on the subject would be handled by others now that Hatzfeldt had been recalled. In London Metternich, not Eckardstein, was carrying on.<sup>1</sup> This was the situation in the late summer.

Of the negotiations so far conducted hardly anything in the way of real knowledge came to Printing House Square. One reason was Chirol's absence in the Far East from September 1900 until June 20, 1901. He had gone to investigate the situation in China and Japan and his mind was naturally, and in view of his long prepossessions, taken up rather with Russia than with Germany. Bell, who was frequently in the company of Chamberlain and knew Eckardstein very well, does not appear to have learnt anything from them of the talks that had been pursued. Informed London, as a whole, was unaware of the negotiations. In Berlin there was no leakage, but Saunders was being communicated with in unusually agreeable terms. He had suspected that a change of policy was intended to which the "alarming civility" he reported as early as September, 1899, to Amery, was perhaps a preliminary. There was no outward sign of any change of policy on the part of either country. Any talk of it seemed to have been particularly wide of the mark when Chamberlain spoke at Edinburgh on October 25, rebuking German claims to superior humanity over the British army in South Africa. It was a speech of which complaint was destined to be made on the German side.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It does not appear that Lansdowne was quick to appreciate the significance of Hatzfeldt's recall, but Eckardstein informed him in due course that "the Ambassador's intervention had led to misunderstanding and that he must have represented my [Lansdowne's] conversation as indicating much more alacrity on our part than we have actually exhibited." Lansdowne to Lascelles, June 9, 1901. (G. and T. II, 72.)

At the time of its delivery Chirol was on the way to Berlin. No record in the office survives to account for his taking this unwelcome journey at this inclement time of the year. When Chirol arrived he was put up at the Embassy. Soon after his arrival, Lascelles invited Friedrich Rosen, the German diplomat and Oriental scholar and an old friend since their respective terms of service in Persia, to meet Chirol at luncheon. Rosen said, incidentally, it seems, that he much regretted the estrangement between Chirol and Holstein which had taken the place of their former intimacy. "It is a great pity," he said, "that two men of so much knowledge and political understanding should now be enemies." Chirol, after some hesitation, said that he had not meant to go to the Foreign Office, but ended by saying that if he could be sure of a polite reception he would pay a visit to Holstein. Rosen told Holstein at once of the interview, and that Chirol was willing to call on him. Holstein answered that nothing would induce him to receive Chirol after his virulent campaign against Germany. It was only with the intercession of the Under-Secretary of State, Herr von Mühlberg, that Holstein was prevailed upon to receive Chirol and to promise to be civil to him.1 Rosen does not give the date of the lunch at the Embassy and none of Chirol's accounts of the circumstances surrounding his resumption of relations with the German Foreign Office refers to it.

The first visit to Holstein took place on October 31. His report to Bülow, as annotated by him, needs to be reproduced in its entirety.

Berlin, October 31, 1901.

To-day, for the first time since January, 1896, I received Mr. Valentine Chirol, according to order, and summarize the contents of the conversation which lasted more than two hours, as follows.

Mr. Chirol described the internal situation of England as highly unsatisfactory because of the apathy of the ruling classes. Regarding Anglo-German relations, he shewed himself impressed by the general animosity against England, which, he said, on every occasion was vented in the German Press and public life in general.

I answered that there is no antipathy, but certainly distrust of English policy even in the German inner circle of the well informed, and that I myself am not free from it. (Bülow's note: Very good!)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> This and the remaining italicised portions in round brackets represent annotations by Bülow. The square brackets enclose phrases made advisable by the brevity of Holstein's

style.

<sup>1</sup> Rosen, Oriental Memories of a German Diplomat (London, 1930), p. 288. Rosen wrote this book in English and published it in advance of his Aus einem diplomatischen Wanderleben (Berlin, 1931-32). Rosen's feeling for Lascelles and respect for Chirol were cordial.

## HOLSTEIN'S DISCUSSION WITH CHIROL

I then justified my point of view by giving concrete examples. First of all I told him that on July 30, 1895, Lord Salisbury had told Count Hatzfeldt that Italy should rather be awarded ample compensation in Albania or Tripolitania, instead of at Zeila which, according to him. was indispensable to England. When the ambassador remarked that [the question of] Albania would probably lead to a conflict between Austria and Italy and break the Triple Alliance, Lord Salisbury demanded that the ambassador himself should draft a plan of partitioning Turkey. Count Hatzfeldt [I continued] reported this suggestion to Berlin, and the Foreign Office, at the last moment, made the Emperor who was on his way to England acquainted with it by wire to Heligoland. His Majesty [I told Chirol] and his government were of the opinion that a partition of Turkey was almost equivalent to a great continental war, and that we had therefore to stay out of the plan, and, if possible, prevent it. Lord Salisbury, who immediately on H.M.'s arrival in England submitted to him the project of partition, received however a refusal which, on account of its vivacity, may have hurt him for the minister had evaded the Emperor's next invitation to a fresh discussion and left for London instead. This rebuff administered to the Emperor had subsequently been the subject of a lengthy diplomatic correspondence between Berlin and London and created an atmosphere which may not have been without influence upon the Emperor's attitude at the time of the Jameson raid.

Mr. Chirol said: "This is the very opposite of what I have always been told so far, namely, that the suggestion of partitioning Turkey had originated with Germany (Bülow: !!), and that Lord Salisbury had only managed to evade further discussion of this dangerous subject by a hasty departure (Bülow: !)."

I had already placed the files at hand and read to him portions of Count Hatzfeldt's report and a telegraphic caution directed to Herr von Kiderlen to Heligoland. Thereupon Chirol remarked: "This is a serious affair. Hitherto one was used to believe a Prime Minister's word. Anyhow I know where I am."

After that I broached the Koweit question and read to him the passage from Lord Curzon's book on Persia, vol. 2, p. 462, which describes the place of Ujair as the Turkish frontier on the Persian Gulf, so that consequently Koweit is situated deeplyin Turkish territory. I then briefly summarized that we had told London [1] that, because of the project of the Baghdad railway, the economic safeguarding of Koweit was important for us, [2] that we had also told London so and [3] [that we had] added that, as we ourselves raised no claims of sovereignty over it, we had advised the Sultan to stop the fighting of the local sheiks by occupying Koweit. The Sultan [I told Chirol] had first hesitated and then, when at last he was about to occupy it, had met with English objections. As far as was known, this English step was caused by Lord Curzon, the Viceroy, who therefore had

# THE END OF BRITISH ISOLATION

here directly contradicted Curzon, the author. Such a policy is [as I told Chirol] not "fair." However, the whole project of the Baghdad railway [I said] was not nearly interesting enough to us to make a serious affair in our relations with England out of it.

After that I turned to the China agreement and the question of Manchuria. Here, too, I referred to the documents and by means of them proved that Lord Salisbury had from the beginning agreed to Manchuria being outside the sphere of action of the agreement. (Bülow's note: The other day I told Deym the same, who reproached me that we had "disappointed" Lord Salisbury, as he had assumed that we included Manchuria in the agreement.) Lord Salisbury had only wished that Manchuria should not be mentioned by name, and therefore had suggested in the course of the discussions that the 38th latitude should be marked as the northern boundary of the agreement. This state of affairs had been confirmed by the statement Lord Salisbury made in the House of Lords on March 28. The reply which Lord Salisbury had given to a question some time afterwards [namely], that he knew nothing of an omission of Manchuria, was not in accordance with truth.

From Chirol's remarks I thought I could draw the conclusion that he regarded my statements together with the documentary proofs as valid. When I said one had to assume that the Prime Minister's memory had been injured by grave physical sufferings, he said that this assumption, too, was rather unpleasant. Regarding the factual side of the Chinese question, he said that, as a matter of fact, the omission of Manchuria from our agreement had grieved him deeply. Whereupon I put forth the idea that England, like every sensible being, must adapt herself to the circumstances of the times. About a hundred years ago, at the end of the first Napoleonic era and even afterwards [I said] England had been the "paramount power" 2 everywhere in the world outside Europe. To-day this state of affairs could not be restored by anything, for to-day there were four first-rate great powers beside England, and an English attempt to play the role of the "paramount power" could hardly lead to anything else but an anti-English combination. (Excellent.) Chirol replied that only a very dense Englishman could nowadays stick to the idea of the paramount power. I remarked that at least in the English press this sticking-to was still occurring quite frequently.

Regarding England's relations with individual powers, Chirol remarked: He did not think much of an agreement with Russia, as it would not change the situation very much. Furthermore it was impossible for England to exclude Japan from an agreement with Russia, and he regarded an understanding between Japan and Russia as extremely difficult.

<sup>1</sup> The English word is used.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In English.
<sup>3</sup> In English.

# HOLSTEIN'S DISCUSSION WITH CHIROL

He considered the United States the most serious (bedenklich)¹ opponent of England. Things being as they are [he said] he would always and in all circumstances advocate an amicable understanding between England and America, if only because in a conflict with America England would always have to sustain the main shock, even should she, contrary to expectation, have any allies. I replied that I perfectly understood this point of view, less because of any military or maritime achievements that might be expected from America, than because of the fact that England is to a considerable extent dependent upon America for her food supply. However, I added, England's position would in any case be easier if she had allies. For in case of war she would be secure in other directions, and—that's the main point—the enemy would view the war situation very differently if England were part of a group instead of being isolated.

Nevertheless [I pointed out] I wished by no means to treat the problem of an alliance as something topical. First I did not think that Lord Salisbury, as long as he had any say, would want to pursue anything but a chestnut-policy2 although this had for a long time been seen through by all interested parties. Secondly, there was no reason why Germany should look round for support, for our situation had substantially improved during the last years. The two Emperors, of Germany and Russia, were to-day firmly convinced of their mutual peaceful intentions. Here Chirol asked the question whether the Russian Emperor had really got this conviction regarding ours. I replied yes, certainly, and referred as a proof to the moderate and restrictive toast with which the Tsar answered the aggressive toast of President Loubet at Compiègne. Moreover, I mentioned the historic fact that Tsar Alexander III had agreed to the French alliance only after all kinds of insinuations, as for instance the tendencious interpretation of a naval address delivered by our most gracious sovereign after the treaty of the Triple Alliance had been extended, had made him suspicious lest the latter [i.e. William II] in his youthful exuberance should really plan something serious against Russia. (Right.) This suspicion, as I had said before, has now been banished from the mind of Nicholas II, and therefore the consideration which had been temporarily pushed into the background had come into its own again, namely, that France would be the most serious opponent of an active Russian policy in the Straits. In order to hide the importance of this fact [I continued] the supporters of the Dual Alliance, it is true, are quand même<sup>3</sup> anxious to twist the Baghdad railway into a German conspiracy against Russia's and England's posi-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> There is no evidence in Chirol's correspondence of any belief on his part that America was a potential enemy. Holstein's word might also mean "critical" or "dangerous" or "serious." The Germans continually at this time urged the view that Britain had nothing to hope for from the United States. See the Kaiser to Lascelles, August 25, 1901. (G. and T. II, 73.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Kastanienpolitik: a solecism intended to mean, "to let Germany pull the chestnuts out of the fire for the benefit of England."

<sup>3</sup> In French.

tion in the Mediterranean, but in view of the actual development of the matter the attempt to interpret the Baghdad project as something politically sinister was doomed to failure. On the other hand, the question of the Straits is still the same sharp cliff as it was 90 years ago when the système de Tilsit¹ foundered on it. (Splendid.) A few years ago the then French minister Hanotaux said during the Armenian troubles: "J'espère que la Russie ne va pas soulever la question des Détroits, parceque cela serait trop gros pour nous." Russia pays regard to this mood of her French ally and lets the question of the Straits lie, even whittles down the whole Eastern question more or less forcefully.² But, of course, by doing so the rulers of Russia are becoming more and more convinced that the stronger and more unassailable the position of France grows, the stronger will become the French bolt on the Straits. The logical consequences follow quite obviously.

In these circumstances Germany, as has been said before, has no reason for frantically looking for further support. I am, however, one of those who assume that the current of the times will step by step draw together the two great commonwealths of Germany and England, even perhaps only when I shall have gone. This opinion is shared in Germany by the leading personalities, *i.e.*, His Majesty and the Chancellor of the Empire. One has to judge a policy not by words, but by deeds, and it is serious deeds that Germany, since the beginning of the Boer war, has, on two repeated occasions, refused the official suggestion that she should take part in so-called good offices. (*Very Good.*) Loyal sentiments prevent me from mentioning, or hinting at, the source of these suggestions. If Germany had taken part, probably all states, certainly all European states, large and small, would have joined, and it is easy to realize the repercussion such an event would have on the population of Cape Colony.

Chirol remarked: "I did not know that the idea of good offices had taken such a concrete shape, but as you say so, I believe it."

I replied that if I were to add the semi-official insinuations two occasions [of German good offices] would not be sufficient. In view of these deeds, words carry little weight. Street noise has no real effect. Sympathy with the Boers is not confined only to Germany; numerous classes wished the Boers good luck if only out of hostility against the institution of standing armies. By the way, I have no doubt that the Boer war, even if it should end in England's favour, would be a permanent burden for England, and therefore I should like to see England thoroughly reorganize her army—always foreseeing that in the future England and Germany would, after all, one day march shoulder to shoulder. Regarding present relations between the two empires, I am of the opinion that the question of an alliance could not be discussed

<sup>1</sup> In French.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., "By hook or by crook."

### "WE MUST EITHER BE FRIENDS OR ENEMIES"

in a practical way, as long as Lord Salisbury is at the helm. All that can be done at present is to keep the future open, if possible.

Mr. Chirol thanked me very much for my communications, and said that as a result of our talk he viewed Anglo-German relations a good deal more hopefully than before. (*Very pleasant!*) He will drop in once more before leaving.

HOLSTEIN.1

Thus Holstein. Chirol's summary, printed years later, of his first conversation with him recalls that during his five years' Berlin correspondentship he watched with increasing concern the new policy of the Emperor as manifested in German activities in South Africa, in China and in the Near and Middle East: and lastly in the great naval expansion which "revealed the growth of ambitions which Germany could not achieve and must know she could not achieve, without coming into conflict with Great Britain." It was impossible, Chirol says he told Holstein, for "any Englishman to view without distrust suggestions for close relations, and even for an alliance, between the two countries which were secretly put forward from time to time by German statesmen whose public utterances continued to be in violent contrast with their confidential assurances of good will." It was when they had agreed to differ regarding the past, reports Chirol, that Holstein begged him to look towards the future. "We must either be friends or enemies," said he. The Imperial Chancellor, like Holstein himself, wished the two countries to be friends and, Chirol says, "wished to convince me, too, that we could be friends." Before himself seeing Chirol, Bülow desired him to know exactly what had passed between the Emperor and Salisbury at Cowes as, said Holstein, "it supplied the master-key to the peculiar workings of the Emperor's mind, which, he admitted, sometimes laid German policy open to unfortunate misconstruction."2

It is uncertain when, precisely, Bülow saw Chirol; but the second interview with Holstein followed on November 2, or 3. Holstein provided, beforehand, on November 1 a memorandum for the Chancellor's approval:

Berlin, November 1, 1901.

General Voyron's publication of Waldersee's letters<sup>3</sup> (Bülow's note The English, too, have not always shown tender consideration) shows a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> From G.P. XVII, 101. A portion only is translated in Dugdale III, at pp. 146-150.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Chirol in The Times, September 11, 1920; Fifty Years, p. 289.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> At the end of October, 1901, the *Matin* published several letters of General Voyron, the French C.-in-C., China, to Count Waldersee. Voyron had passively resisted Waldersee's orders.

lack of consideration, to say the least. Voyron himself probably wishes to obtain by it the good will and votes of the nationalists; but, considering the regulations about journalistic activities of the military. recently issued by the Minister for War, it cannot be supposed that this publication has been done without the Minister's permission. This fact—on the principle that unilateral considerateness mostly means being taken in-confirms me in the intention I had already conceived before, to tell Chirol, on the occasion of his next call, something about the French attempts to draw us into an anti-English action. (I shall therefore do the same, in a perfectly quiet and detached manner, in which one tells an historical fact.) I should tell him, roughly, that I had, by all kinds of reports and observations. been led to the opinion that he was to be treated irrevocably as an opponent of Germany. From our conversation of yesterday [I shall continue] it appeared that this assumption is unfounded, and I therefore thought that I might without scruple go a step further. Persons [I shall tell him] for whom the French government is not responsible even if it could not dispute its relations to them, continuously take pains to persuade us to join an anti-English action. As the reports are always consistent with one another [I shall proceed]. the assumption is therefore strengthened that their instructions emanated from the same place. It had repeatedly been stressed by them that France as the defeated power could not take the initiative with us. On one occasion it was also said that if the feeler met with a favourable reception, the Marquis de Noailles would receive instructions. Germany, on her part, has refused, though without being rude, to enter into a discussion. This, however [I shall tell Chirol] did not prevent the agents from coming back to the matter again and again. Of late it was also said that France was prepared to let Tangier and Madagascar pass into German possession. On the other hand, France wanted the rest of Morocco and Siam for herself; contingent German wishes in China would then be discussed.

Then I should point out to Chirol that the offer of Tangier and Madagascar intimated the desire to put Germany as a buffer between France and England. In any case this suggestion proves that France has fairly considerable wishes in the Mediterranean as well as the Far East (very good) and one might perhaps assume that, if French interests were ignored in a Russo-English agreement, France would afterwards help herself to what suited her, trusting in Russia's backing and England's isolation (Excellent).

The idea of a German-English alliance would also have to be discussed with Chirol, with an appearance of unconcern (I, too, think this correct. We must not betray any disquiet, nor impatience, nor haste, but must make hope glitter on the horizon. This hope, after all, offers the surest guarantee against a capitulation of the English to Russia). Some years ago [I should say] the matter was once spoken about on a purely academic plane between Count Hatzfeldt and the

# HOLSTEIN'S SECOND DISCUSSION WITH CHIROL

late Lord Randolph Churchill. The latter had briefly summarized the core of the question, saying that an alliance which only protected England's European possessions was of little value, but that on the other hand it would be difficult to find a power ready to extend the alliance to all English colonies. This opinion [I shall proceed] undoubtedly still holds good to-day. For instance, Germany cannot think of rushing to war on account of India, just as it would not occur to England to wage war in order to keep Metz and Strasbourg in German possession. The question [I shall maintain] would. however, be different if there were several aggressors and these so overwhelming, that the whole existence of the attacked state would be threatened. In that case it would no longer be a matter of India or Alsace-Lorraine, but of the balance of the world being maintained or shifted. From this point of view [I shall argue] it appears possible to win over public opinion for an alliance which would become effective only if one of the contracting parties were to be attacked by several great powers, whereas war duels would have to be fought without the ally's assistance (or with the help of third parties). In the present situation it might be assumed—as far as human judgement goes—that England rather than Germany might find herself in a position to need such assistance. As far as England is concerned, and as far as it is possible from here to put oneself in England's place, only one dangerous possibility would have to be considered, namely, whether England, in consequence of such an obligation, could ever find herself in a position to wage war against America, as Germany's ally. That would presuppose that America together with another power, e.g., France, would fall upon Germany, a contingency which after all is hardly worth discussing.

The idea of a German-English alliance in this form—the only possible one—is a seed that must ripen gradually. Germany can wait, and the Emperor, according to his nature and character, will wait as long as the future remains open. It is lucky that we can afford to wait, for at present, under Lord Salisbury's paralysing or at least delaying influence, nothing serious and final would be achieved. The attempt to attach England to Germany alone, instead of the Triple Alliance, would be a kind of half-measure which, from the outset, must be described as unacceptable. With an exclusively German-English defensive alliance, it might come to pass that Germany would succour Austria or Italy when attacked, and that England would then declare: 'Germany, after all, has not been attacked, therefore the casus foederis does not apply.' It is one of the most improbable possibilities that England, backed by the Triple Alliance, should be attacked at all. A single power would take steps against England only with the greatest reluctance, because of her well-known tenacity and perseverance. And it will hardly be possible to bring together a group which would be willing and capable of defying England and the Triple Alliance combined.

On Germany's part, the serious objection against the German-English alliance might perhaps be raised: that England, once she has, by means of such a treaty, pushed us out of our position vis-à-vis Russia, which is at present neutral, comparatively secure, friendly and neighbourly, might bring us into all kinds of unpleasant and embarrassing situations, by misusing her maritime preponderance. On the other hand, one can argue that the treaty would after all be concluded only for a definite period, say five or six years, and not be renewed if either of the contracting parties found a snag in it. Mutual interest well understood thus seems to offer a guarantee of fair play.

HOLSTEIN.

[Final note: I quite agree with everything, especially with our disclosing to Chirol the future perspectives of a German-English alliance. Of course, that does not exclude us, as long as England is being piloted by Salisbury in the manner employed hitherto, from taking the most tender care of our relations with Russia, nor in any way from discouraging French attempts at reconciliation.

Bülow, 1/11 [1901].1

Whether the conversation with Chirol on these lines was conducted by Holstein, and Bülow received him later; or whether Bülow and Holstein received him together is not known, but there can hardly be any doubt that Bülow intended to do everything possible to keep Chirol in good humour, to suggest the desirability of maintaining friendly relations between the two countries and perhaps to impress upon him the responsibility of public men and writers for peace. According to Chirol's accounts in the Quarterly Review, The Times, and in his book of memoirs,2 the Imperial Chancellor received him in his most urbane manner, and before outlining his conception of a practicable defence "alliance" between Germany and Britain alluded to the Cowes interview of 1895. Bülow endeavoured to discover from Chirol whether he was in possession of any account that Lord Salisbury himself might have given of the interview. Chirol's reply in the negative led Bülow to mention the Anglo-German agreement of 1900 which, in the German view, applied to Manchuria as well as to the Yang-tze.

As to an "alliance," the Chancellor, endeavouring to exploit Chirol's well-known predilection for the Japanese, said that the projected pact with Japan would affect the British need for a guarantee of the Far Eastern status quo, while making it unnecessary for Germany to assume obligations in that part of the world. And in any case Germany, he

<sup>1</sup> G.P. XVII, 101. 2 For an analysis of Chirol's conflicting statements made in 1914, 1920, 1923 and 1927 see Appendix, pp. 810-9.

# BÜLOW'S INTERVIEW WITH CHIROL

said, could not contemplate risking her relations with Russia. He went further and said that the sensitiveness of St. Petersburg regarding Anglo-Russian friction in Asia might defeat the peaceful objects of an Anglo-German understanding. Nor was he to be moved by Chirol's reminder that an Anglo-German agreement on the lines foreshadowed would be a one-sided bargain in Germany's favour: it would bind Britain to support her in Europe against Russia and France, and in the Pacific against America; whereas Britain needed support in the East against Russian attack.

In response to Chirol's reminder of the effects upon British opinion of the atrocity campaigns and the Navy Bills of the day, Bülow pointed to the future. This could be assured by Germany and Great Britain joining hands to defend it. "Germany was ready and willing and England had been passing through painful experiences, which had taught many of her statesmen that it was unwise for her to rely upon splendid isolation. Mr. Chamberlain had admitted it, and declared Germany to be her natural ally on the Continent."

When Chirol asked whether the Chancellor would have him believe that the Press Bureau of the Foreign Office had not been privy to the violent and often obscene outbursts of Anglophobia in the German Press, and whether, too, the German Navy Bill was not a "far more significant attitude towards England than ceremonial demonstrations of Imperial amity which alternated with less public, but perhaps more genuine, exhibitions of the Emperor's hostility," the Chancellor admitted that more might have been done to "restrain irresponsible scribblers in the Press who did an infinity of mischief," but England was too powerful at sea to be jealous of Germany's modest attempt to follow in her footsteps. Bülow's conception of a future defensive alliance had one great defect in Chirol's eyes: it was too limited. But the Chancellor asked him to think it over very carefully; and, through The Times, to use his influence to bring back Anglo-German relations to the old footing of confidence for which Bismarck had long worked, although Britain was not at that time prepared for an alliance. Bülow renewed his protestations of friendliness towards Britain, and affirmed, in tones that deeply impressed Chirol, that he would never countenance press-attacks on Britain. Chirol carried back to London the Chancellor's assurance of his benevolent intentions towards Great Britain and towards himself.

The earnestness of the Chancellor's emphatic assurance impressed him, Chirol acknowledges, much more than the substance

of his arguments. He was pleased with the conversations and believed that they had been useful in promoting better relations. He wrote to Rosen a word of thanks:

British Embassy, Berlin, November 4, 1901.

Dear Dr. Rosen,

I must send you a line before leaving to say how much indebted I feel myself towards you for having so kindly and efficiently delivered my message to Baron von Holstein.

I have had two long and interesting conversations with him, and apart from the pleasure of seeing old relations restored which were amongst the most agreeable reminiscences of my residence in Berlin, I think they may bear some fruit in promoting a better understanding between our two countries.

They have certainly served to clear up several points which had hitherto remained obscure to me in the policy of Germany.

Kindly believe me,
Yours sincerely,
VALENTINE CHIROL.1

Chirol dined with Bell on November 6, which, if he followed custom, was the date of his arrival back in London. He could then have left Berlin on November 4 or 5. That his report was on the optimistic side can hardly be doubted. Some idea of his attitude may be gathered not only from his letter to Rosen but from the remarks which occur in a letter to Steed written on the 12th. He had been away in Berlin for a week, he says, and while there he came to the conclusion that

the Germans are not very happy. They are not so sure of the Dreibund, *i.e.*, of its present value to them and permanency in the future as they were; and, on the other hand, the coolness with which France has responded to the Waldersee soft sawder and sundry formal advances from still higher quarters has strengthened the belief that the Franco-Russian alliance, unless it refrigerates under other influences, will always remain, from the French point of view at any rate, an anti-German alliance above all. Hence also some apprehension lest they may not have gone too far in their tolerance of pro-Boer demonstrations and pan-Germanic Anglophobia.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Rosen, Oriental Memories, pp. 176 ff.; the letter is in the style of Chirol, its date is correct and the text reads well in conjunction with the opening of Holstein's first report (G.P. XVII, 101), which makes it clear that Holstein was so unwilling to meet Chirol that he wished to put the fact on record. The letter conflicts with Chirol's published statements made for the first time thirteen years later. For a statement of the contradictions in Chirol's accounts, see Appendix XII.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Chirol to Steed, November 12, 1901. (F. 4/670-1.)

### CHAMBERLAIN'S EDINBURGH SPEECH

Simultaneously, strong exception was being taken in the German Press to Chamberlain's speech of October 25. The Edinburgh speech was reported in the London papers on Saturday the 26th. Saunders's first telegram on the subject was, as usual, based upon comment in the German papers of the day following, i.e., the 27th. The message, printed in The Times of the 28th, i.e., on Monday before Chirol's first interview with Holstein, on Thursday, begins with the statement that "Mr. Chamberlain's speech at Edinburgh has evoked a perfect storm of indignant protest in the German Press." On November 1 Saunders reported that "a large number of journals continue to discuss the references made by Mr. Chamberlain at Edinburgh to the conduct of the German operations in France in 1870." The Correspondent drew attention to the underlying reason why the Germans, or a section of them, are excited to indignation by Mr. Chamberlain's comparison: they were daily fed with reports concerning the British troops in South Africa that were, Saunders said, "infamous lies." The comparison necessarily bore a highly inflammatory character, and when the students at the University of Greifswald, with the backing of their professors, passed a resolution repudiating the libel upon the German people and army, the true explanation lay in its origin, i.e., the longstanding campaign which alleged that the British placed helpless women and children in front of their ranks when hard pressed by the enemy. On the 4th Saunders telegraphed that the resolution of the Greifswald professors and students had been circulated to all German universities in the hope of evoking similar manifestations.

The German Press gradually gave increased prominence to atrocity stories. Chamberlain's Edinburgh speech, intended to answer the Germans, had enraged them. They alleged that Chamberlain, in a spirit of wanton audacity, had insultingly compared the German army with bands of British mercenaries. Within a week of Chirol's departure, the British Ambassador saw the Imperial Chancellor. Lascelles was told by Bülow on November 9, 1901, that while 99 per cent. of the Germans were strongly pro-Boer, the very same people would vote, and to the same extent, against any policy that was calculated to lead to an estrangement with Britain. In Whitehall the German reaction to the Edinburgh speech was not understood. Metternich had succeeded Hatzfeldt, doubtless with new instructions, while, at the height of the anti-Chamberlain agitation in Germany, Lansdowne was compiling a memorandum on the Eckardstein proposal. He began it on November 11 and finished it ten days later. He had seen Metternich, who, however, had not mentioned the

"alliance" question; he had also seen Eckardstein and he had not recalled it. "I have, however, received various indications which show that the question is still present to the mind of the German Government, and particularly to the German Emperor."1

The memorandum enumerated the difficulties and said that in view of Lord Salisbury's attitude it was impossible to entertain the German overture in the form "presented by Hatzfeldt. but that he would not, for these reasons, refuse all further discussion of the question." He apparently looked forward to a series of local and limited understandings, while remaining free from commitment to the Triple Alliance. He said, too, that in approaching the Japanese we had virtually admitted that we did not wish to continue standing alone. "The knowledge that we have been negotiating a Treaty with Japan, an incident of which the German Government is sure to hear, could scarcely fail to add to their irritation in such circumstances."2 Lansdowne, therefore, said that whatever the decision of His Majesty's Government, "it seems to me that the time has come for frankly explaining our views to the German Ambassador. Unless some such explanation takes place we shall be accused of not knowing our own mind, and of breaking off negotiations in a discourteous and unfriendly manner." The Foreign Secretary completely ignored one complication that the Wilhelmstrasse could hardly avoid: Chamberlain's speech had made the present a decidedly inopportune moment in which to bring about any sort of rapprochement.

The Edinburgh speech, three weeks after delivery, was being execrated all over Germany, as Saunders reported on November 12, 14 and 15. Public meetings had been protesting against Chamberlain and all his works since the end of October. Also the Government was asked to deport Saunders; earnest individuals pointed to the necessity to boycott him und ihm das Leben verbittern.3 It is impossible to doubt that the agitation was national in its scope as well as spontaneous

<sup>1</sup> Lansdowne's Memorandum, November 11-November 22, 1901. (G. and T. II, 76.) Lascelles had been on leave since November 9, and had seen the King and Lansdowne.

2 For The Times and the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of 1902 see infra, pp. 354 ff.

3 Wilhelm Treue, "Presse und Politik in Deutschland u. England während des Burenkrieges" in Berliner Monaishefte XI, 1933, p. 786; the author by an oversight refers to Chamberlain's speech as delivered at Birmingham. Cf. A. Tille, "For years, the English correspondent of The Times in Berlin has been carrying on in his paper a determined agitation against everything German. Should he be deported? That is what he apparently wants. For a deportation would get him, at home, an immense crowd of followers and a seat in Parliament. What would happen in England in such a case? One would boycott the gentleman, exclude him from any social intercourse, shut him off from all sources of news and worry the life out of him to such a degree that he would have to leave whether he likes it or not. Why should we not be able to do the same? It would shut off one of the principal sources of English ill-feeling against Germany." (Tille, Aus Englands Flegeljahren, Berlin, 1901, p. 61.)

#### HOLSTEIN WRITES TO CHIROL

in its inception. As Noailles informed Delcassé on November 9, 1901:

The irritation caused in Germany by the Edinburgh speech is still running very high. . . . The wave of condemnation has extended to all classes of German society. Meetings have been held in several towns: at Hamburg, those who attended demanded of the Government that it take the matter up officially with the London Cabinet and expel *The Times* correspondent. 1

On November 20, The Times, in its first leading article, referred to "this extraordinary outburst." Chamberlain's speech was the "most flimsy" as well as the "most recent" pretext for anti-British agitation. The article emphasized the extent to which German public opinion had been poisoned and proceeded to a reasoned argument that, as Chamberlain nowhere assumed the irregularity of British methods in South Africa, there could be no question of "insult" to the German army. The Times concluded by hoping that the expectation of its Berlin Correspondent of an interpellation in the Reichstag to be addressed to the German Government would turn out to be correct. The journal saw in such an interpellation the opportunity for the Imperial Chancellor to define the attitude of the Government towards anti-British agitation. It should be borne in mind, the leader said in its final paragraph, that "popular sentiment may be powerless to affect the foreign policy of the German Government, but in this country popular sentiment does in the long run exercise a considerable amount of influence even on policy." Chirol's pen had so far dealt very fairly and fully with the Press campaign; he sympathetically considered the position of the Government. "It would be unfortunate for both nations if the belief were to gain ground in England that, in spite of many common interests and many common traditions, the passionate enmity of the German people must be regarded as a more powerful and permanent factor in moulding the relations of the two countries than the wise and friendly statesmanship of German rulers."

The article brought an instant reply. On the following day Chirol received a telegram from Holstein:

[Berlin, November 21, 1901]

VALENTINE CHIROL,

The Times Office, London

I just read the article in yesterday's Times concerning Mr. Chamberlain's unlucky utterance. With characteristic loyalty you

<sup>1</sup> Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914). (2ème Série, I, 634.)

have again put under the eyes of the public the text of the offensive phrase although that reproduction does not facilitate the task of exonerating Mr. Chamberlain.

The analogy drawn by him is offensive in two ways. Firstly it places our warfare on the same level with French warfare in Tongking; what the latter was like we know from the indiscreet correspondence which caused Pierre Loti's name to be struck off the rolls of the French Navy. Secondly Mr. Chamberlain asserts that English warfare never even approached those examples.

According to Mr. Chamberlain we have to seek our equals in Tongking not in the British Army. This, you will admit, is rather more than a flimsy pretext for venting our anger; it constitutes in my opinion a real bona fide insult. Mr. Chamberlain evidently does not mean to weigh English and German grievances in the same scale, or else the wording of the explanation given by his private secretary to Mr. Mariner would have been less overbearing and more to the point. I had been in hopes hitherto that an explanation—not an excuse—would come, but I expected something calm and matter of fact. According to the views now expressed by Mr. Chamberlain or by his private secretary I could not claim to be looked upon as a sensible man, for I consider Mr. Chamberlain's first outburst as decidedly offensive and the tone of his present explanation as that of a school-master admonishing a lot of very stupid little boys.

I fully realise that you are striving to conciliate. You may have remarked that the same sort of work is going on here. What can be done under the given circumstances? Germany cannot be expected to admit that it had no right to feel offended, for the offence is rank. But undoubtedly there is a way—provided there be a will—to find a form of explanation which by simply and plainly stating that no offence was meant would give a firm standing ground for discussion to those who like you and me wish that there may be peace and good will between the two countries.

Yours very sincerely,

HOLSTEIN.

The tone of Holstein's telegram was that of a man apparently desirous of going some distance towards meeting an objection, while at the same time representing his own position as obviously the more conciliatory and reasonable. He was thus able to repeat the old charges and insinuate the new one that Britain was adding a new "insult" by refusing to acknowledge the righteousness of the national protest.

Chirol made immediate and reasoned answer expressed in terms that to-day read as singularly restrained and even friendly:

#### CHIROL-HOLSTEIN CORRESPONDENCE

BARON HOLSTEIN,

Auswärtiges Amt, Berlin.

Whilst appreciating reciprocating your friendly intentions I have read your telegram with profound regret. I did not conceive possible that such deplorable misconstruction be placed in responsible quarters upon Mr. Chamberlain's utterance.

To enumerate variety of different cases as Chamberlain did is not to place them all on same footing. Had he singled out one country for comparison such selection might have appeared invidious though even then it must be remembered that inasmuch as no British Minister can be supposed to pass condemnation on action of British army no analogy which he draws between conduct of our army and of foreign army can possibly imply condemnation but rather approval. If I say that my sense of honour is as great as yours you cannot contend that I have insulted you unless you are prepared to dispute my sense of honour. If German Government endorses view that comparison between British and German methods of warfare is *ipso facto* offensive it can only mean that it endorses to some extent charges of disgraceful conduct brought against our army.

Please remember that we have sons brothers friends fighting in Africa and that it makes our blood boil to see them vilified every day in German newspapers by odious accusations which we know to be absolutely untrue. I submit these observations earnestly to your dispassionate consideration. The Times defended German action in French campaign and it cannot now admit that Chamberlain either meant or has given grounds for offence in alluding to it as precedent for our action in Africa. I must respectfully appeal to the assurances given me whilst in Berlin that popular clamour would fail to move by one hair's breadth the friendly and fairminded policy of the Imperial Government.

Yours very sincerely, VALENTINE CHIROL.

Holstein, in a telegraphed reply, argued that:

You would be right in your reasoning, if Mr. Chamberlain had put German and English armies and warfare on the same level. But he has not. His phrase that "English warfare never even approached those examples," if it means anything at all, is meant to imply that British warfare is much more humane than our warfare was in '70. Now that comparative cannot be accepted. Mr. Chamberlain did not say that British humanity or sense of honour is as great as German sense of honour; he pointed out that the Germans had shown themselves inferior in that respect. I cannot reasonably take offence if another man declares that he is as good as I am, but I have a right to feel hurt if he makes me out to be inferior to him. As a just man you cannot help admitting that, for I know by practical experience that you do not work with two weights and two measures.

Holstein concluded his telegram by a cordial greeting. But evidently the Germans were not now to be moved from their

contention that the honour of the German army had been impugned by Chamberlain. His second telegram proved, also, that Holstein was prepared, or preparing, to see in the speech, the agitation to which it had given rise, and the isolated position of Britain, an opportunity, if he could only prevail upon *The Times* to assist, to force her into a conciliatory mood. But the policy of allowing Germany to "kick Britain into friendship" was not one *The Times* was likely to sponsor deliberately. Chirol's prompt reply was in his firmest language:

Still think you entirely misconstrue Chamberlain's words and intentions. He did not say that your standard of honour was lower than ours but merely that we had not availed ourselves as fully as you did of latitude granted within standard of honour common to both you and us. There is no question of comparative standards of honour. His position was as follows. The Government has been attacked on one side by factious minority for undue severity and on other side by large section of its own supporters for unwise leniency. Chamberlain answered latter criticism by declaring time was approaching for more vigorous measures and former criticism by adding that even such measures would fall short of practice of other nations in modern warfare. He never condemned measures you adopted as unlawful but merely asserted that we have not yet adopted nor propose to adopt all the measures which you lawfully adopted. I cannot honestly see reason for complaint except upon assumption which is incredible that British Minister admitted that we had adopted or were contemplating unlawful measures and sought to justify them by charging similar or even more unlawful measures upon you.

Having thus dealt with Holstein's argument, Chirol pointed out to him

that though this speech was delivered several days before our friendly interchange of views at Berlin you never mentioned objections which might be taken to it.

The correspondence, as it is copied in the letter-book at P.H.S., was terminated by Chirol's final paragraph:

The bitter spirit in which public opinion has rather belatedly taken it up in Germany has made it impossible to assume any other than a firmly defensive attitude on a question which has been made the pretext for the most virulent attacks against honour of our army.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The telegrams are copied without date in Chirol's letter-book (P.H.S. 4, 675-686), but it is obvious that they extend over the week after the appearance of the leader on November 21. Chirol's belief that "public opinion has rather belatedly taken it up in Germany" is not obviously correct if Saunders's telegram of November 1 is accurate. There is little ground, therefore, in the messages which Saunders sent either before or after Chamberlain's speech of October 25, for Chirol's theory that the German Foreign Office was responsible for the campaign against it. Equally there is no support for Chirol's statement that "no sooner had I returned to London than the speech was suddenly dug out again by the whole German Press, semi-official as well as unofficial." Cf. Chirol in The Times, September 13, 1920, summarized in appendix XII to this Volume.

#### METTERNICH TACKLES MOBERLY BELL

On November 20 Metternich reported to his superiors British reaction to the Anglophobia in Germany, and also noted British attempts at a rapprochement with Russia. Bülow's acknowledgment took the customary position. German Anglophobia existed but the provocation lay in Chamberlain's speech and in the Boer War, as all Continental countries felt. No country had shown such a benevolent attitude towards England in the war as had Germany. There is no reference to an "alliance" in Bülow's dispatch. The subject, evidently, was dead. It did not follow that influential persons in Germany and in Britain were blind to the danger of allowing the situation to drift. Bülow and Holstein would avoid at all costs action that would tend to encourage Britain to make friends with Russia.

Renewed efforts by Bülow and Holstein to employ *The Times* in the service of German diplomacy would also be made. The failure of Holstein's direct exchanges with Chirol, like Eckardstein's and Hatzfeldt's conducted through official channels, made it the more desirable to keep on the best of terms with P.H.S. In the circumstances, it might be well to urge the German view upon Chirol's superiors. Bell was known in London to a greater extent than Buckle or Chirol, or both put together. He was a great host and an inveterate diner out. Few men of equal influence were easier to meet. German diplomacy, which commanded many social and other resources at this period, was fully equal to the task of contriving a convenient meeting ground.

Sir Ernest Cassel invited the Bells to dinner and bridge on December 4, 1901. The Duke and Duchess of Devonshire and Mr. Wilfrid Ashley were there and also Count Metternich, the German Ambassador.

"Directly after dinner" (writes Bell in his memorandum of the conversations), Cassel said to me, "Are you keen on playing Bridge?" I said "Not the least unless you will pay my losses to Ponte Vecchio (the Duchess) and guarantee the payment of her losses to me."

He said, "Farceur! then take care of poor Metternich, who hates Bridge," and we went upstairs. Directly we went upstairs, Metternich came to me: "So you don't like Bridge?"—"Not to-night at all events": "Nor I—ever—then suppose we have a cigar."

With that we went to the library where there were two chairs on either side of a table, with cigars, whiskey, soda, &c., and I formed the impression (rightly or wrongly) that it had been arranged—and was on my guard. After the shortest preliminary M. began: "I hear you've been to America," and then, after a little general talk about tourists' impressions he said, "And do you think this strong attach-

ment—let us call it—now so prevalent between the two countries will last?"

- B. "I don't think there is a 'strong attachment.' I think there is a strong identity of disposition, thought, tradition and interest which is bound to bring us into line."
  - M. "But it's quite recent, this interest."
- B. "No; I think not. In England we have always felt towards America a totally different feeling to what we feel to any other power. I don't think an Englishman could contemplate the possibility of war with America—he frequently thinks of it with other powers."
- M. "But America is as likely to be your enemy as any other power. She is your great trade competitor. She is as much German as English. She has already begun to dream of being a world power. She will have a fleet equal to yours. She will then be tempted to contest your naval superiority. It is distant perhaps, but it must come."
- B. "Nothing is impossible. I will only say it's improbable and that I see other possibilities at least equally probable. With us she can still trade as much as she likes—with you she cannot. Her ambitions (if she has them) and her commercial interests (which she has) are more opposed by every other power than by England—a possibility which is not more of a dream than your dream of war, i.e., an alliance."

It was Bell who, on his own account, drew the "alliance" into the conversation. The question was thus dealt with:

- M. "Alliance-against whom?"
- B. "No one. Against whom is the triple alliance directed?"
- M. "Well, apart from dreams, do you not think that the interests of England and Germany in Europe are still more closely identical?"
  - B. "I don't recognize that we have direct interests in Europe."
- M. "Have you not? Let us suppose the improbable again. Suppose that Germany were by some catastrophe by the alliance of several powers, to be deposed from her present position as the first military power in Europe, and that France and Russia could deal single handed with England, would it not be a danger that Germany should be crushed?"
- B. "Yes, but let me reverse the situation; if England were crushed would not there be the same danger for Germany?"

The question suited Metternich. At once he replied with more alacrity than might have been approved in Berlin:

M. "Clearly; therefore our interests are identical—then why not an alliance?"

# BELL'S ANSWER TO METTERNICH

- B. "Precisely because they are identical therefore there is no need of it. In either contingency, both highly improbable, the interests of the one would be to avert the disaster to the other. Why then throw down the glove to other powers by an alliance which is automatically certain to take place in the only case in which it can be useful?—Besides, there are other combinations."
- M. "Well, all the more reason to secure one ally against possible combinations."
- B. "Yes, but if so we should be wiser to choose that ally which can singly do us most harm."
  - M. "And that is?"

Bell refrained from answering that it was Japan, as Metternich probably expected or guessed.

B. "I don't know, but it is not Germany. Let us suppose again the impossible. Let us suppose that the very worst happened between the two countries. I will suppose even your Excellency grossly insulted and reparation refused: what can Germany do? She recalls you. What next? She declares war. What next? How can you touch us? I see points where we can make ourselves disagreeable to you. We can blockade Hamburg, take Samoa, drive you out of S. Africa, or try to do all three. But what can you do? Absolutely nothing."

Bell's logic was flawless. At the time he spoke there was something that the Japanese could do but the Germans could not, and Metternich's need to maintain the "alliance" as a talking point was one of the corollaries of German inability to check Britain. In Berlin the implications of Bell's reference to a blockade had been realized and were being given increasing consideration. Even while Bell was speaking to Metternich the German navy was in process of being doubled. The future high policy of Germany would include greater naval expansion, and, secondly, its protection by a diplomatic effort designed to offset British fears of such competition. The one way to render safe a long-term plan of German naval building against Britain was to persuade Britain that Germany was a friendly Power, only too anxious to conclude an alliance.

Considerations of this order were not ignored by Lansdowne. On December 12 he answered Salisbury's demand for a more precise statement of what was contemplated in his memorandum and minute of November 22.<sup>1</sup> He sketched the heads of a series of limited understandings regarding the *status quo* of the Mediterranean, the Adriatic, the Aegean and the Black Seas, freedom of traffic in the Persian Gulf, &c. "An agreement

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 335-6, ante.

upon the above lines would amount to little more than a declaration of common policy, of a desire to maintain close diplomatic relations." In a final paragraph Lansdowne admitted that he had an impression that the German Government (or the German Emperor) desired "something much more precise than this, and that they would refuse an overture on the above lines. Should they do so, no great harm would be done, and we shall have put it out of their power to accuse us of having 'dropped' them."

The Bülow, the Holstein and the Wilhelmstrasse policy had been to talk with the British; they would confer among themselves; finally they would plead that the time was not ripe, while encouraging Britain to make one offer after another on terms increasingly favourable to Germany. Eventually the Wilhelmstrasse would have the British Alliance on her own terms; in other words, annex her to the Triple Alliance dominated by Germany. Meanwhile nothing was to be done but to keep the British friendly. This had been the justification for spending time upon Chirol. The Chamberlain speech was no help to Anglo-German relations; but the agitation put the German people in the humour to pay for the new ships. All talk of an "alliance" must be postponed until the navy was ready. The British could never come to terms with Russia or with France. They would be pressed by their Eastern and Middle Eastern necessities to approach Germany. That would be the time at which to make Britain sign. But on December 19, just before Metternich went home on leave, Lansdowne reminded the Ambassador of the course of the discussions, admittedly unofficial, on this subject; he explained that the subject had dropped as the result of Hatzfeldt's illness, his yielding up his post, and the holidays. He informed Metternich that he had been told by Eckardstein that Hatzfeldt "was regarded as having pushed matters rather too far and fast, and that, for a time at all events. it was not thought advisable that the negotiations should be considered." But, Lansdowne added, Eckardstein had since mentioned "in confidence" that he thought "the time had come for renewing our discussions." Having recapitulated the history of the talks and explained that the holidays had intervened to prevent his laying before his own Government "proposals upon so momentous a question," he proceeded to the subject itself:

I told Count Metternich that I had waited to see whether he would mention the subject to me, as it seemed to be one to which, as soon as his position as Ambassador to this Court had been confirmed,

#### LANSDOWNE AND METTERNICH

he would be likely to refer. As, however, he had now held his appointment for some weeks, and as he had not mentioned the subject, I thought it desirable, in order that there should be no misconception, that I should approach it.

Thus began a new attempt as it was taken in Berlin, or a second stage of the old negotiations as it seemed to London. Lansdowne proceeded to inform Metternich that so far he had failed to secure anything more from Hatzfeldt or Eckardstein than "the most general indication of their views." He did gather, however, that "the proposal before us, if indeed it was before us, was that the British Empire should join the Triple Alliance." That proposal had been considered, but Lansdowne did "not think that for the moment we could afford to take it up."

The Ambassador replied that he was not sure that the Foreign Secretary had correctly described the German proposal as merely implying the adhesion of Great Britain to the Triple Alliance. "What was suggested was that there should be two great groups: the one consisting of the Triple Alliance and the other of Great Britain with her Colonies and dependencies." This was a magnificent opportunity to secure peace for half a century and the Ambassador said he wondered that Britain did not "jump at it." The British preference for isolation, becoming more marked, had become unintelligible.

As to the unofficial talks that had been proceeding, Metternich said that "the German Government had certainly been under the impression that our failure to reopen them had indicated a desire to drop the question altogether and it was assumed that some event had happened which had led us to close the question." The "event" was the holidays, Lansdowne explained. Both agreed that the present time was not a favourable one for further pursuit of the question; and Metternich added that he feared that "an opportunity so favourable as that which presented itself last summer might not again occur." It would be the tendency of Germany to move more and more towards Russia. Replying to Lansdowne Metternich said that no minor proposal was likely to be entertained. "It was a case of 'whole or none." On December 28 Lascelles, who had only a week or two ago returned from leave in England, was invited to lunch with the Kaiser. He travelled to Potsdam with Bülow, whom he had not seen since his return, although he had met Mühlberg on the 27th. Lascelles mentioned the Lansdowne-Metternich meeting and then learnt from Bülow that Metternich had not reported the conversation regarding the alliance. The Chancellor hoped

there was no misunderstanding on the subject as Metternich had been instructed not to speak about an alliance unless the subject was broached to him by Lansdowne. Lascelles proceeded to say that Lansdowne had mentioned the subject to Metternich and to himself as, in the Foreign Secretary's view, the time had now come when H.M. Government should give a reply to the proposals which had originally been made by Baron Eckardstein for an alliance. The pourparlers had, Lascelles recounted, advanced to a certain point when Hatzfeldt, whose health had slightly improved, had in conversation with the Foreign Secretary explained that the proposed alliance must include both Austria and Italy as members of the Triple Alliance. Lascelles concluded his account of the position by saying that it was because the Foreign Secretary realized that further delay on H.M. Government's part might be considered a want of courtesy that he had mentioned the matter to Metternich, and explained that it was not advisable to pursue it at present. Bülow agreed that the present was not an opportune moment for continuing discussion of the matter. "But he hoped that the question would not be dropped altogether, as he was convinced that an alliance such as had been proposed between the Triple Alliance on the one hand and Great Britain on the other would secure the peace of Europe for the next five and twenty vears,"1

Later in the same day, the 28th, Metternich reported to the Wilhelmstrasse the conversation he had had with Lansdowne on the 19th. Thus it was on this day that the British Government's negative answer to the proposals, which had originated with Eckardstein's talks to the Duke of Devonshire and others in January, 1901, was officially given to the Germans. The year ended with the collapse of the last stage of the negotiations. No further efforts were made by Britain to come to terms with Germany.

The year had not so far brought victory to British arms in Africa, but it had not ended too confidently for Germany. A leading article of October 29 (published during Chirol's absence in Berlin), which recommended Britain to consider allying herself with Russia as well as with Japan, had by no means passed unnoticed. Within ten days Noailles reported, perhaps with some exaggeration, to Delcassé that the suggestion had provoked outbursts of feeling. The German Press answered by saying that *The Times* evidently cast Russia for the role of dupe. Metternich later in the month reported that the article may

<sup>1</sup> Lascelles to Lansdowne, January 3, 1902. (G. and T. II, 84.)

have been inspired, as there were other signs of an English approach to Russia. Hence Lascelles's official announcement that Britain was not prepared to discuss an "alliance" at the present time was taken as a snub. But still the Germans had no desire to be recognized as being anti-British. Another exchange of letters between Holstein and Chirol took place at the end of the year. Chirol, apparently, wrote complaining of the outrageous tone of the German Press and saying that while German pro-Boer agitation continued an Anglo-German agreement was untimely.

Holstein's reply, dated January 3, 1902, was most cordial.1 It conveyed the writer's "Best wishes for your health and your good humour in coming year." "Good humour," Holstein proceeded, "is very essential, and we must not allow it to be impaired, even when discussing the war of words which is being waged by the organs of public opinion." That sort of warfare, he said, began in January, 1896. "A great part of to-day's harvest was sown then. A great part, not all of it. I remember your telling me one day, in '95 or '96, that you had noticed with surprise the amount of ill-feeling prevalent here against England." This, the writer said, was due to a belief that Great Britain's policy, ever since 1864, had been anti-German or at least anti-Prussian. More than that, "British policy," because it kept itself free from any sort of engagement with Germany, "is leaving no stone unturned to bring about a great continental war." Neither the Triple Alliance, nor any of its members, nor Russia was mentioned, but the reference to "war" doubtless covered Holstein's annoyance at Salisbury's attitude towards Turkey and Russia, and towards the "alliance" question. It was known that he was unfavourable to any Continental undertakings and that in the event of war between Germany and another Great Power it was his opinion that Britain could have, without risk to herself, any alliance she chose, provided Germany and Russia remained in the respective positions created by the Kaiser's refusal to renew Bismarck's treaty. Hence Holstein thought it necessary to distort Salisbury's innocent opinion that a Continental war could not harm Britain into a guilty "plot" to bring about such a war. Holstein's letter to Chirol, therefore, once more conveyed a strong hint that the "alliance" question must some day be settled, and that upon Germany's terms. It was the object of Holstein's talks with Chirol, and of his correspondence, to make him see that, as Germany's strength grew England's freedom to reject a German alliance correspondingly

<sup>1</sup> Text in G. and T. II, 84-5.

diminished. The diplomacy of Germany was directed by her military power to overrun any Western neighbour, and was otherwise not so weak that she could be ignored by England. These were the views that Holstein desired Chirol to see and to accept and to urge in *The Times*. Refusal to do so would be interpreted as an encouragement to Germany's enemies; indeed, a provocation, deliberately taken with the object of bringing about the "great continental war." The pacification of Europe, then, lay through an Anglo-German understanding. The contemporary pro-Boer feeling was of no significance, it was merely a transient cause of exasperation; only "I quite agree with you that, while it remains effervescent, the time for an Anglo-German agreement has not come."

Holstein proceeded to tell Chirol that the recent negotiations had originated in England. He began the story in 1898—August rather than January, however. Lord Salisbury was not present when Mr. Chamberlain originally adumbrated his plan at a Cabinet Council<sup>1</sup> to which, according to Holstein, Lascelles had been summoned. Now "[He] has in all probability determined to stick to isolation, and to await the great continental war which he thinks must come some day, and which, perhaps, would have come already, if all parties concerned were not by this time aware that Lord Salisbury is waiting for it. Should that hope fail and the worst come to the worst the old Byzantine expedient of buying off the Barbarians would still be practicable and might perhaps, in Lord Salisbury's eyes, be preferable to a friendly agreement with the German Emperor." Holstein's reference is probably to a speech of Salisbury's delivered at the Lord Mayor's banquet2 in which he said that it was "a superstition of antiquated diplomacy that there is any necessary antagonism between Russia and Great Britain." The history of the "alliance" talks revealed Salisbury's hand. He had not been present when Chamberlain mentioned his plan in 1898, and as a consequence, Holstein said, serious doubts were entertained from the first regarding its possibilities of success. For his own part, he affirmed

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It was not to a Cabinet Council but to a luncheon at Chamberlain's that Lascelles was bidden. Cf. Lascelles to Chirol, January 10, 1902, in G. and T. II, p. 86.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Salisbury's attitude was not in the least likely to be understood by the Teutonic mind. "It has happened not infrequently in the last years" Sir Thomas Sanderson told Chirol "that Cloun]t Hatzfeldt has come to me and complained 'Voilà une [chose?] que j'ai causée avec Lord Salisbury et que le diable me prenne si je comprends la politique de votre Gouvernement.' To which I used to reply that he ought to know that we had not got a policy and worked from hand to mouth. I once repeated one of these outbursts to Lord Salisbury who laughed and said 'I had no idea that our conversation had such far reaching objects yet you might tell Hatzfeldt that with a Parliamentary régime like ours, it is impossible to pledge the Gov[ernmen]t as to the course it will take in case of some future emergency.'" Sanderson's note on an interview with Chirol, 21 January, 1902. (Cf. G. and T. II, 88.)

once more: "I formally and repeatedly expressed the conviction that no agreement of any kind would be come to while Lord Salisbury had voice in the chapter." Holstein proceeded to describe how instructions were sent to London forbidding the diplomatic representatives there to mention the subject. It was the Ambassador's business "to receive and eventually to discuss such overtures as might be made to him." That had been understood until Hatzfeldt, when he was not well, went farther, whereupon he was recalled. Thus, "cause and effect lay open to Lord Lansdowne's eyes, and I, therefore, felt somewhat surprised to hear about a week ago that your friend Lascelles, referring to Hatzfeldt's last conversation with Lord Lansdowne, had informed the Chancellor that the British Government considered the present juncture as unfavourable for further discussions of an Anglo-German agreement." The matter should have been allowed to rest, but, as it was, this "Absage" was a refusal "which we cannot help regarding as a gratuitous and perhaps a premeditated snub." It did not improve the prospects for an agreement later on. "I even suspect that in Lord Salisbury's mind this rebuff was intended to shelve for good the question of an Anglo-German agreement." But Holstein ended his letter on a more cheerful note. After referring to the need, felt by Roosevelt as well as by himself, of a British effort to improve its Army, he said that "My interest in those questions is based upon the belief that at some future time the two great Nations may yet get together, although in all human probability I shall not then be here to see it." Finally Holstein showed the good humour he had recommended to Chirol by expressing his hope that he had during his holidays "achieved a mark at ping-pong, which I understand to be the sensation of the hour."1

Chirol sent Holstein's letter to Lascelles, who replied that either Holstein had not been kept properly informed or was deliberately seeking a grievance.<sup>2</sup> Lascelles suggested that Lord Lansdowne would be glad to see Holstein's letter. Meanwhile, The Times took the opportunity presented by its correspondent's customary annual survey of the course of German foreign policy during 1901 to say in a leading article printed on January 7, 1902, that although it might be taken for granted that Germany's future policy would be faithful to the principle of friendship with Russia, it was noticeable in Berlin that her eastern neighbour's interest in German policy left something to be desired. As to the question of a British alliance, the newspaper now gave its answer to Holstein. The Times said that it must view an alliance with

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> G. and T. II, pp. 84-6.
<sup>2</sup> Eckardstein's Lebenserinnerungen proves that the former is the correct hypothesis.

Germany as an alliance against Russia; or, on the other hand. an alliance with Russia as an alliance against Germany. "Either or, on the reinsurance principle, both of these alliances might be useful, if there were solid grounds for supposing that one or both could be effected." The paper concluded that the two Powers might have grievances, but were unlikely to allow them to develop into a breach, and the question of an alliance did really not arise. A similar consideration applied to German relations with the Triple Alliance. Italian criticism of German treatment of the Poles might be resented; the demonstrations of Austrian Poles had drawn from Berlin a protest to Vienna, but Germany's basic policy would not alter. "She may be somewhat uneasy as to the supposed coquetry of Italy with France, but she will remember that nothing is so likely to give zest to an amusement of that kind as an injudicious interference." The Times at the beginning of 1902 was still in favour of isolation from Europe. Also Chirol's views concerning Far Eastern problems discouraged any serious interest in a Russian alliance. The Germans, he thought, could be dealt with separately though no longer by a policy of concession. It was necessary to stand up to them, that was all. They were not as strongly buttressed as they thought or, at least, claimed. Holstein's letter, when duly forwarded to Lord Lansdowne, elicited from Sir Thomas Sanderson (Permanent Under-Secretary) an explanation which he gave orally to Chirol. It provides (in the form of a memorandum which Sanderson used as the basis of his conversation) a final statement of the British view of the course of the negotiations. The memorandum naturally and correctly assumes that the negotiations were so private that Chirol was unaware of them.

As regards the communications made here on the subject of a possible alliance between Great Britain and Germany I should not have thought it right to speak on such a subject if Baron Holstein had not first mentioned it to you. As he has done so I have obtained Lord Lansdowne's permission to correct some apparent misapprehensions.

The subject was first started by Baron Eckardstein in conversation with Lord Lansdowne in March last, and was pressed by him on Lord Lansdowne's attention on several subsequent interviews. Bn. Eckardstein stated that these conversations were unofficial but that he was speaking with authority. The discussions were deferred at Lord Lansdowne's request on account of Lord Salisbury's absence from England. In May Count Hatzfeldt, who had returned to the Embassy, took up the subject in conversation with Lord Lansdowne, and stated that any agreement of the kind must be so framed as to include the members of the Triple Alliance. Upon Ct. Hatzfeldt's

# BÜLOW'S "BAD DAY'S WORK"

departure on leave Bn. Eckardstein stated that His Excy's, intervention had complicated the matter, and suggested that for the time the discussions should be discontinued. Subsequently at the close of the Session Baron Eckardstein proposed that they should be renewed. but Lord Lansdowne pointed out that they could not be usefully pursued at a time when all the Ministers were dispersing for the holidays. After Count Metternich's arrival here some indications led Lord Lansdowne to believe that the German Govt. might consider themselves slighted if the matter were allowed simply to drop sub silencio without some further explanation of our views. He therefore took an opportunity of discussing the subject frankly and fully with Ct. Metternich before the departure of the latter to Berlin for Christmas and explained to him the reasons for which we felt in present circumstances and especially in view of the present temper of the two countries that we were unable to entertain the project. Lord Lansdowne has been assured that his explanations have been accepted both by Count Billow and by Baron Richthofen in the most friendly manner, and have been in no way regarded by them as indicating any want of cordiality or regard for the German Govt.1

The Foreign Office had reason to consider it had dealt very well with the affair. The value of the Triplice, now that one of its members was entertaining what were presumably serious suggestions from France, occasioned in fact, real anxiety in Germany. "We shall wait and see whether . . . [an alteration of policy]... is at the bottom of the striking speeches and replies that have been exchanged by France and Italy on the subject of an agreement which in itself is perhaps unexceptionable," the National Zeitung had written on January 7. When the Reichstag met on the following day, Bülow began his allocution by taking the opportunity offered by a previous speaker's reference to give the assurance that all was well with the Triple Alliance. He deprecated the criticism of Italy, on the wrong ground and for the wrong motive, in which certain German journals had indulged. It was a pacific Alliance and did not exclude the possibility of good relations between its partners and other Powers. The Alliance was no longer necessary for Germany herself, since world affairs had developed far since 1879 when Alsace-Lorraine was declared Reichsland. If the speech reassured the Reichstag, there was a passage in it that greatly disappointed The Times. A reference by Bülow to Chamberlain's Edinburgh speech had, the paper noted, drawn the cheers of his audience; but he had done "a bad day's work" for the promotion of friendly relations between Britain and Germany. Warming to the task, The Times

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Sanderson's draft of a proposed letter to Chirol, cancelled when he dealt with the matter orally. The date is January 21, 1902. (See G. and T. III, 88.)

retorted upon the Chancellor: "He has chosen to miss his opportunity and indirectly to pander to the popular German view that it is a slight upon Germans to compare their troops with those of England. He cannot be surprised if his conduct is resented by this people."

In the rest of Europe it was Bülow's statements concerning the Triple Alliance that were given the greater study. Germany did not wish her allies to take it for granted that she profited most from it. Her strength, then, was such as to be a source of strength to others—to Italy particularly; and it was hoped she would not forget it. In Austria it was recognized that although there had been no move from Italy's side to renew the partnership, there was plenty of time for her to do so. The Times Vienna Correspondent gave it as his opinion that the Alliance would be renewed. "Whether it will be done with enthusiasm or resignation is another matter." A leading article in the issue of January 11 echoed his opinion and added that the question of the mood in which the Treaty was renewed remained a question "upon which a good deal may turn."

In the same issue The Times printed a long dispatch from Saunders reporting the debate on foreign policy in the session of the Reichstag adjourned from that of January 8 when Bülow did his "bad day's work" for Anglo-German relations. The passionate pro-Boer movement had shown no sign of waning. A Pan-German deputy, it was now reported, described Chamberlain as "the most accursed scoundrel on God's earth." To The Times the meekness of Bülow's protest, having regard to his attitude on January 8, was an aggravation that was intolerable. "Seldom, if ever, has a friendly nation been so grossly insulted in a foreign Parliament, and never within our memory has the insult met with such a mild rebuke," affirmed a leading article on January 11. The paper followed on January 13 and 14 with two instalments by the Berlin Correspondent of the German attitude towards the Boers as illustrated in the Press, the comic papers and in general literature. For the first time the nature, extent and violence of the anti-British campaign was detailed. Saunders did not admit that any effective section of German opinion held an opposite view. On the 19th The Times published a leading article on German Anglophobia. These articles were most unwelcome to the Wilhelmstrasse, the strength of whose case was that anti-British comments in the Press were unrepresentative. Any hope that The Times could be won round had vanished. The publication of Saunders's article led to renewed demands for

### GERMAN COMPLAINTS OF SAUNDERS

his expulsion. But the Germans were not going to repeat, with Saunders, the blunder they had committed with Chirol in 1896. Although many demands were voiced in the German Press that Saunders should be expelled, the Wilhelmstrasse's policy throughout the period 1901-1905 was rather to make Saunders the object of systematic private and public criticism calculated to fray the Correspondent's nerves and to provoke his resignation or retirement. The Correspondent himself would have been glad of a change and in any case his interest in his children's education compelled him to look forward to the time when he could bring them to England and Scotland. Notwithstanding, Saunders appreciated the fact that either private criticism or public clamour for his expulsion, all the more a combination of both, must stiffen the resolve of *The Times* to keep him at his post in Berlin.

Between the collapse of the Chamberlain negotiations for a German understanding and the success of the consequent Anglo-French conversations Saunders's telegrams were widely read at home and reproduced in Germany. During these critical years they exercised a telling effect upon influential British opinion and, what was perhaps even more grave in the eyes of the Germans, had the effect of encouraging the French. The diplomatic activity of France was occasioning more and more discussion in Berlin.

On January 14, 1902, Bülow complained to Lascelles of the unfair comment of *The Times* upon his speech of January 8 which was, he affirmed, intended to be friendly to Britain and was so understood by his audience.<sup>2</sup> Lascelles admitted that his first speech had struck him as disappointing, but that the second was perfectly satisfactory. He was "astonished" that *The Times* had received so disagreeable an impression from it. As Bülow's complaint to Lascelles proves, official Germany was not ready to quarrel with Britain or *The Times*. But the paper was not alone in resenting German criticisms.

King Edward wrote to the Kaiser, saying that, in view of the violent anti-British speeches in the Reichstag, "especially those

<sup>1</sup> Not without opposition from other influential London journals, the views of which were naturally preferred in Germany. See P. Dehn, England und die Presse (Berlin, 1915), p. 29, for an appreciation of the Daily News at the expense of Saunders and "Calchas" (of the Fortnightly Review). (See Appendix, pp. 800 ff.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Ambassador's view of the Chancellor's first speech had not been favourable and he admitted as much to the Kaiser on January 22, but during the same interview, agreed that the second speech was distinctly friendly. German pre-occupation with the question of the renewal of the Triple Alliance did not permit them to risk Austrian and Italian good will by allowing Anglophobe manifestations to be carried too far. Lascelles to Lansdowne January 16, 1902. (G. and T. I, 268.)

against my Colonial Secretary and my army," he thought the projected visit of the Prince of Wales to Berlin had better be postponed. A renewed invitation, expressed in the most cordial terms and assuring him of a friendly reception by the German people was promptly dispatched. When the visit took place, complimentary speeches in the Reichstag were provided, and nothing was left undone that would contribute to a lasting impression of welcome.

The misgivings of the other partners to the Triple Alliance were thus eased. Meanwhile the Germans had been giving close consideration to all possibilities. The General Staff, obliged to envisage the conditions created by a hypothetical conflict with France, had decided to adopt the plan of invading through Belgium. In this connexion Italy was being asked to help Germany with 200,000 men. But Italy was inclined to put her interest in Tripoli before the German interest in Belgium or France. Simultaneously, Metternich, the German Ambassador in London, on January 30, 1902, reported to Bülow that Chamberlain was discussing with Cambon the possibility of settling with France all outstanding Colonial questions, including Egypt. Berlin was not perturbed. It was still firmly believed that Britain's interests in the Mediterranean placed her in permanent opposition to French ambitions, just as her interests in the Persian Gulf and the Far East put an Anglo-Russian rapprochement out of the question; and that the disposition of her fleet was thereby affected to Germany's benefit. Hence the view of the Germans was that nothing Britain could do, either in connexion with France or alternatively with Russia, could upset their naval plans. At the most, Italy might embroil her partners with Turkey over Tripoli. But while Metternich was writing, Britain was about to conclude the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, of which little was known to the Germans.

The Treaty was the culmination of talks of which *The Times* from the first possessed better information than it ever secured regarding the Anglo-German negotiations. The Far Eastern question had developed in three episodes. First, until the Boer War a strong line seemed possible; secondly, during the war, Britain had to remain on the defensive in China; thirdly, after the peace, it would be both "too late" for Britain to revert to its old policy and impossible in isolation to initiate a new one of any firmness. A solution to Britain's Eastern troubles was soon discussed. As early as March, 1900, Count Hayashi talked

# "CHINESE" MORRISON IN DANGER

seriously to Morrison about a British-Japanese alliance.1 In that spring, the internal situation of China, due principally to anti-foreign agitation, assumed a new and decided importance. Warnings were disregarded, however, and the Boxer attack upon the Legations in June was unexpected. On the 16th The Times correspondent, with Captain Strouts and Colonel Sheba, were defending an exposed position. A volley struck all three. Strouts was the most seriously wounded and died; he was given medical attention by Morrison whose injuries to the thigh were so serious that he was reported killed.2 During the next three years Great Britain had only one hand free with which to fight the Far Eastern battle and Russia had the advantage. It was impossible to advocate a strong policy with any hope of success; and, much as Chirol believed the Yangtze valley to outweigh the Transvaal in importance, he had to moderate his views. Morrison, writing from Peking, naturally took a narrower view. He continued to criticize the British Government sharply, with the result that Chirol felt himself bound, unwillingly, to modify his telegrams. During these three years, Morrison, and to no small extent Chirol also, did all they could to sustain the interest of the British

country has ever had a more devoted, a more fearless, and a more able servant than Dr. Morrison. . . . It is not too much to say that throughout the last three critical years in China, it is to Dr. Morrison that the British public has looked from day to day for the China, it is to Dr. Morrison that the British public has looked from day to day for the earliest and most accurate intelligence concerning events in which the interests of this country have been so largely and often, we fear, prejudicially involved. With extraordinary judgment, amounting almost to intuition, in an atmosphere which he used himself to describe as 'saturated with lies,' he discriminated with unfailing accuracy between what was true and what was false. With never a penny of 'secret service' money at his command, his own shrewdness and resourcefulness, his untiring industry, his infaits conscit for this point each led him time and grain to transmit important his infinite capacity for taking pains enabled him time and again to transmit important information of which the official confirmation used only to limp in with halting steps two or three days later. It was in his honour that Lord Curzon, when Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, coined his now historic phrase about 'the intelligent anticipations. tion of events before they occur'; and though not primarily intended as a compliment, it was perhaps the most genuine tribute ever wrung from unwilling lips to the highest

qualities which a correspondent can bring to bear upon his work.'

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Hayashi, Secret Memoirs 1915, p. 111; W. Primke, Die Politik der "Times" von der Unterzeichnung der Jangtse-Abkommens bis zum Ende der deutsch-englischen Bündnisbesprechungen, Oktober 1900 bis Mai, 1901, Berlin, 1936, p. 14.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The report of Sir Claude Macdonald. British Minister at Peking, mentioned in dispatches that: "Dr. Morrison, *The Times* Correspondent, acted as lieutenant to Captain Strouts, and rendered most valuable assistance. Active, energetic, and cool, he volunteered for every service of danger and was a pillar of strength when matters were going badly." His obituary was printed in *The Times* of July 17, 1900. The leading article, after lamenting that the British residents in Peking must be considered lost, said that: "There is one other amongst the victims of the Palace who claims a special tribute at our hands-Dr. George Ernest Morrison, our Peking Correspondent. Dr. Morrison has had so many hairbreadth escapes in the course of his most adventurous life of 38 years, and possessed such infinite resource in moments of emergency, that we cannot quite relinquish the hope that he may possibly have escaped in the confusion of the final slaughter. At any rate, if any European does survive it seems not unlikely to be he. His career is characteristic of one of the best types of colonial Englishmen. A wanderer in strange lands and desert places from his youth up, he had developed by wide and patient observation his remarkable natural powers of insight and of generalization. It is not for us to dwell upon the extraordinary value of the telegrams he sent to this journal in the most critical period of recent history in the Far East. They showed some of the highest gifts of statesmanship in a degree which savoured of genius."

The obituary stated that: "No newspaper anxious to serve the best interests of the

public in the Far East, in spite of distractions. "England," as Paul Cambon described her situation to Delcassé, "is isolated and her forces remain immobilized in South Africa. She therefore has to resign herself to letting Russia do in China what she likes. It is the recognition of this situation which arouses in the public apprehensions which the dispatches addressed to The Times by its Peking correspondent revive every morning." This was the background of the Anglo-German talks, initiated in the early part of 1901, which have already been chronicled. For two years the Press of Russia, with that of the rest of the Continent, had been attacking British policy in South Africa and in slandering the conduct of the British. St. Petersburg journals most closely connected with official circles displayed the greatest antipathy to Britain. Even the possibility of a Russian lead to a joint Continental intervention was discreetly discussed in certain circles. However, the arrival of the Boer delegates with Leyds in the Russian Capital passed without one word of mention in any section of the St. Petersburg Press. Whether Nicholas II, as was later alleged by Leyds,2 made any definite soundings of the willingness of Germany and France to join in, is not certain, but that the Russians were determined to press their advantage is obvious.

Morrison was strikingly successful in exposing Russian pressure in Peking. His dispatches covering the war negotiations in the Chinese Capital brought him into immediate prominence. Their revelations roused Curzon to ill-tempered comment in the House of Commons, and were followed by a vigorous defence of the correspondent by Chirol in The Times. Successes of this kind continued. On January 3, 1901, his report of the so-called Alexeiev-Tseng Agreement, giving Russia military rights on the Manchurian railway, caused great excitement in England. On this occasion it seems that the correspondent though correct in substance was inaccurate in detail. His messages regarding the Boxer Rebellion confirmed Chirol in his belief that the Celestial Empire was effete; they also provided him with confirmation of Germany's ambitions, and the office thoroughly disapproved of the international force under the command of Waldersee. The Count himself testifies to the paper's critical attitude towards him:

The Times, which is represented here by a wretched scamp, has already alleged that the English liaison-officers at Headquarters did not do their duty. That is nothing but mischief-making against me

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> P. Cambon to Delcassé, March 30, 1901. (D.D.F. 2ème série, I, 203.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Also by Holstein to Chirol. (See Chapter XX, infra.)

#### CHIROL CULTIVATES THE JAPANESE

from the part of the English Legation here. . . . Only now has it become known here through the newspapers that I have been vigorously attacked for some time by the English, American and Russian press. The lead is taken by The Times, that arch-liar, the articles of which emanate no doubt from a Mr. Morrison who, probably, in true English reporters' megalomania, believes I ought to take notice of him. I am no more impressed by press attacks than by the barking of a dog; but I am surprised that a newspaper like The Times allows itself to be served so badly all the time. The Englishmen here are ashamed of their countryman, but do not possess the courage to send him away.1

After the rising Chirol paid a third visit to the Far East. He was away from the office between October 18, 1900 and June 28, 1901. During his absence a "curious feeler" was published in The Times, so Holstein interpreted it and described it to Eckardstein. The Berlin Correspondent had received the German-English-China (i.e., the Yangtze) Treaty with the observation that the British Government were wrong to make friends with Germany rather than with Russia.<sup>2</sup> The results of Chirol's journey were not cheerful: "I brought home the conviction that whilst China was crumbling hopelessly to pieces, Russia was steering deliberately for a conflict with Japan."3 The first part of this dictum was by no means new. Chirol's policy since 1897-8 had been based on the assumption that China was breaking up. It is significant that he did not go straight to Peking but first travelled up the Yangtze valley in order to visit the Viceroys of Nanking and Wu-chang, who had kept Central China free of the Boxers. These dignitaries made a very deep and favourable impression on him.

In Tokyo Chirol had a long conversation with Count Ito. They congratulated each other on the success of the collaboration of British and Japanese troops, which had arrived in China before the rest of the allied army and had done most of the work before Waldersee's arrival. Ito proceeded to explain to Chirol the significance of the Boxer Rising. Speaking as a historian, he said that it meant that China as an Empire was rotten and must collapse; speaking as a statesman, he insisted on the necessity for continued Anglo-Japanese cooperation in the face of Russian ambitions. In his record of this conversation, Chirol adds that his visit to southern China made him feel that Ito was unduly

Waldersee, Denkwürdigkeiten (Stuttgart, 1923), III, pp. 80, 100.
 Holstein to Eckardstein, December 22, 1900, in Eckardstein, Lebenserinnerungen und politische Denkwürdigkeiten (Leipzig, 1920), p. 226. For a German view of Saunders's messages regarding the Yangtze Treaty, see W. Primke, Die Politik der "Times," p. 46.
 Fifty Years, p. 208.

gloomy about the future of the Empire.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, as we have seen, his final judgment was very much along the lines indicated by Ito. Predictions of oncoming war were not disregarded in all quarters. The German expert view was expressed by von Brandt in the Deutsche Revue for July, 1900: "One need not exactly credit the prediction by The Times of war after the next twelve months, and foreseeing an absolute necessity for the Japanese to wage it then—made perhaps because the paper believes that that would best serve Britain's interests—but there is no doubt that Korea is a black, a very black spot in the skies."

Chirol's interest had come to rest chiefly in Southern China and he now returned home firmly convinced of the need to support the Viceroys, who were the semi-independent rulers of the southern provinces. He wrote from China in this sense, a letter which Bell thought it well to forward to the Foreign Office. Lansdowne read it with care and acknowledged to Bell that:

It is important that we should keep well in with the Viceroys.<sup>2</sup> We have taken them a good deal into our confidence, and lent one of them a considerable sum of money. They are naturally enough sitting on the fence. I should like to keep them on our side of it, but we must be careful not to commit ourselves to engagements which it may prove inconvenient to fulfil. I will bear in mind what your correspondent says.<sup>3</sup>

Thenceforward support of the Viceroys became the settled policy of *The Times*.

This policy, equivalent to a major development in Chirol's outlook, represented a move towards the policy of protecting the status quo in place of his earlier ambition to alter it in Great Britain's favour. The Boer War, with its consequence of enforced British inactivity in China, thus had its diplomatic effect. In the mid-nineties Chirol had hopes that exclusive British influence in the southern provinces could be asserted; and, with this in view, he had advocated the development of communications between Burma and these provinces. By the end of 1901 Chirol's view, adjusted to the conditions that then prevailed, was expressed in a leading article. The Times now gave support to Curzon;

<sup>1</sup> Fifty Years, pp. 198-201.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This sentence underlined in pencil, presumably by somebody in P.H.S.

<sup>3</sup> Lansdowne to Bell, Foreign Office. February 18, 1901. (P.H.S. Papers.)

### BRITAIN'S NEED OF AN ALLY

disliked the idea of joining Burma and Szechwan by railway. The paper emphasized in melancholy terms how times had changed.

Were we in undisputed possession of the Yang-tze valley, even in a merely commercial sense, there might be much to be said for such a railway from a strategical point of view. But we have no such dominant position to maintain, nor are we at all likely to acquire it. There is no need to argue the question whether we might at one time have acquired it. Had many things been different from what they are, and had our hands been less full in other regions and with other enterprises, possibly we might have obtained a position in the Yang-tze valley for which an outlet to Burma would have been a security. We cannot exclude other nations, and the Anglo-German agreement of 1900 has put that fact definitely on record. (December 12, 1901.)

Such was the unhappy position after the Boer War. The feeling, in point of confidence, was not to be compared with that of the period before the Jameson Raid. Gone were the days when it was possible to talk of acquiring a pre-eminent position in certain parts of China and defending it with all the forces of the Empire. A second-best policy only was practicable and to pursue this, even, it was necessary to look for help.

Towards the end of the year, while Chirol was absent, aspirations current in certain English circles favourable to cooperation with Russia found expression in The Times. The idea was given a cold reception in the St. Petersburg Press when it was first mooted. The Novoye Vremya preferred to discuss, in a series of articles, the question whether Russia needed India. The atmosphere gained nothing from the comments of The Times upon the numerous revolutionary disturbances in St. Petersburg, Moscow and elsewhere, which occurred at this time, but The Times blessed the visit of President Loubet. The conviction was repeated that the signing of the Franco-Russian Alliance was a service to peace. A few weeks later the murder of General Trepoff, chief of Moscow police, was described by The Times correspondent at St. Petersburg as the inevitable result of the repressive measures adopted by the Russian Government. The Russian Government's appeal to the French to watch Russian émigrés in Paris met there an instant response. French opinion, said The Times of April 26, 1902, might murmur, but it could hardly assert the right of asylum on the eve of Loubet's visit to St. Petersburg. The President, as that new transmission system, the "wireless

telegraph," announced, left Brest on May 15. His arrival gave *The Times* a welcome opportunity to repeat the view it had held since 1894, that the Dual Alliance gave reality to the European situation by restoring the balance of power. The paper quoted Goluchowski's statement that the Dual Alliance was a useful complement to the Triple Alliance, and also to Prinetti's agreement with the Austrian statesman, and linked both statements with Bülow's assertion that Germany no longer looked upon the Triple Alliance as a necessity. "To outsiders like ourselves these results of the Alliance between France and Russia cannot be displeasing. The course of events has more than confirmed us in the good wishes with which we hailed its birth."

In Russia, British policy was still being strongly criticized and Russian policy in *The Times*. Morrison's sharp eye left no move unnoticed and his strictures regarding the Russian pressure towards Manchuria were widely influential.<sup>2</sup> The news of the declaration of peace in South Africa was received with widespread disappointment in St. Petersburg, which an anti-British Press had prepared for a long-drawn-out resistance by the Boers. It was hoped by not a few Russians that the strength of Britain in the East would thus be sapped.

On January 30, 1902, when the Anglo-Japanese Treaty was signed, German satisfaction was profound, for it seemed to the Wilhelmstrasse that it effectively and absolutely divided England from Russia, and completely justified the German refusal to accept Hayashi's invitation. The increased divergence between Britain and Russia naturally strengthened the Wilhelmstrasse's resolve to maintain correct relationship, but no more, with Whitehall. It was believed that events would quickly prove to Britain that, in her continental isolation and with an expensive colonial war on her hands, she still had most to gain from an alliance with Germany; and also that German policy, above all with the existing Anglo-Russian situation, could afford to take its time. It was at this time an axiom in the German Foreign

<sup>1</sup>The Times gave every encouragement to Marconi during his early "wireless" experiments, particularly in 1901, after the success of his attempt to send and receive wireless waves across the Atlantic. At that time, and for long afterwards, important sections of the technical press deprecated Marconi's work on long-distance wireless communication. From the first, however, The Times declared its belief in him. In December 1902 messages were exchanged between the Marconi station at Glace Bay in Nova Scotia and that at Poldhu in Cornwall. The first "wireless" news message was sent by Sir George Parkin, The Times correspondent, after which wireless transatlantic communication became general.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See Noailles to Delcassé, March 2, 1902. (D.D.F. 2ème série, II, No. 116.) Morrison also described German intrigues in Shantung.

#### THE ANGLO-JAPANESE AGREEMENT

Office that not Germany, but Britain, was isolated. There was complete confidence on the point in Berlin.

It did not follow that Germany could afford to disregard all existing and countervailing factors. Both German naval programme and foreign policy necessitated the maintenance of an atmosphere of good will in Britain, otherwise the risk to the German navy from the existing strength of the British navy would be dangerously increased; it was necessary also to preserve a basis for the alliance when, in the judgment of Germany, the time was ripe, *i.e.*, when it was calculated that the growing strength of her naval and military power would suffice to extract the maximum political and territorial concessions from Britain.

The German naval policy programme lay at the heart of the diplomatic situation. It was realized only by a few in Germany and fewer in Britain that the huge industrial plants, created at an unprecedented cost for the execution of these programmes, would need to be kept running by fresh programmes; while none knew that the Kaiser and Tirpitz were agreed that Germany's future required a fleet capable, by its existence in being, of forcing Britain to attach herself, on Germany's terms, to her side. In Britain, it was not assumed that the programmes of 1894 and 1898 were directed against her, although it was recognized that they imposed new necessities upon the Admiralty. The programme of 1900 had provided for doubling the number of German battleships. By 1902 this programme was well forward and its progress rendered it correspondingly important for the Germans to continue the policy of reducing their risks by allaving anxiety across the Channel.

The Anglo-Japanese agreement announced at the end of January, and the signature of the peace treaty with the Boers at the end of May, combined to offer a strong motive for a new assessment of the international situation; above all that of the position of Russia and her relations with Britain and Germany. Not a few influential persons in both countries, unconnected with politics, saw possibilities, during the spring, of reaching an understanding on the subject of naval armaments, and afterwards on broad policy. For *The Times* the naval matter was hardly yet an anxiety. Bell's view, as expressed to Metternich at the end of 1901, was optimistic. He thought there was plenty of margin at present. There could hardly be any doubt of the side *The Times* would take. Bell had not for nothing cultivated the acquaintance of Alfred Mahan since his first rise to fame.

<sup>1</sup> See supra, p. 343.

Thursfield, the paper's naval adviser, was also deep in the American Admiral's confidence. The Germans had the right to build themselves a navy; Britain was bound to take into account any change, not favourable to us, in the balance of naval power. In Berlin it was generally believed that the British alliance with the Japanese improved Germany's diplomatic position vis-à-vis France as well as Russia. But it was still feared that her already increased and increasing naval strength might rouse Britain. Everything for Germany turned on Britain's taking no immediate action against the German navy.

Hence it remained absolutely necessary, at least for the present, to lessen Anglo-German friction and to maintain in powerful circles in England the conviction that Germany was her "natural" ally. From this point of view the attitude of The Times towards Germany was more objectionable even than hitherto. The speculations that had appeared in the newspaper regarding the desirability and possibility of an Anglo-Russian rapprochement had now aroused the uneasiness of German observers. Count Bernstorff, first secretary in the German Embassy, was at this time specializing in Press relations. He made it his business, says Hammann,1 to maintain relations with distinguished journalists and win them and other influential persons to a policy of rapprochement. And time and again, says Hammann, when a turn for the better was in prospect, the vote of The Times was cast on the other side. One more effort to neutralize The Times was determined upon. Two days after the Peace of Vereeniging, Metternich presented to the King the Kaiser's congratulations, and took the opportunity of telling His Majesty that feeling in Germany towards England had greatly improved, more so than British feeling towards Germany. He named The Times as the chief obstacle to good Anglo-German relations. as a disturber of the peace and as unwilling to let emotions rest.

His Majesty seemed to recognise the justice of my remarks and gave expression to the confident anticipation that the discord would pass away: at this he lifted *The Times* from the table and showed me, as proof that aggressive tones can also be found in the German press, a telegram from their Berlin correspondent headed "A German Opinion" which reproduces the contents of an article in the *Berliner Neuesten Nachrichten*. I answered His Majesty that the taking of a single reproduction of an article by a dissenting critic as typical of the whole German public opinion, showed sufficiently the spite and distortion of which *The Times* for long had been guilty.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges (Berlin, 1919), p. 113.

#### MORE GERMAN ATTACKS ON SAUNDERS

On the following day, Metternich returned to the topic and assured Bülow that:

He had discovered confidentially that the King had complained about the attitude of *The Times*, and has spoken to several members of the *Haute Finance*<sup>1</sup> of what action should be taken against it. My interview with the King has thus not failed in having its effect, but I fear that *The Times* nevertheless, will not alter its aggressive attitude.<sup>2</sup>

Metternich's encounter with Bell at Cassel's six months previously certainly gave no grounds for optimism, but a chance of success might well present itself if the highest influence could be brought to bear. In any case the growing influence of Saunders's articles on the leaders of public opinion in England revived the activities in London of some of those who were responsible for pressing upon Chamberlain in 1898 the case for an Anglo-German alliance.

In the meantime attacks on Saunders by name were constant in the German journals. The correspondent gave them incidental mention in a private report to P.H.S. Their timing by the Berlin men was not, it seems, coordinated with the Ambassador's efforts in London to soften the heart of The Times and there is no need to assume that they were directed by Bülow's Press staff. The feeling against The Times in certain circles was too general to need organizing. One of the attacks was clearly spontaneous. Saunders, however, appears to have declined the opportunity to allow it to occasion a breach of relations. On or about the 8th or 10th of the month, at a social meeting of members of the Reichstag and others, held at Count Posadowsky's house, von Richthofen, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, having been addressed by Saunders, rebuked him. Speaking coram publico3 he said to The Times correspondent: "Nobody has poisoned the public opinion of England as against Germany more than you. I have told your Ambassador several times that, in view of the influence of The Times in England and the repercussion of its opinions in Germany, your malicious and poisonous method of reporting cannot but be considered as disastrous for both countries." That the incident became widely known in German Press circles is obvious from Th. Schiemann's

<sup>1</sup> Doubtless Bell's intimacy with Mond, Beit, Cassel and Rothschild are meant; see *supra* pp. 341-2 for the account of Metternich's attempt, after dinner at Cassel's house, to persuade Bell to accept the German view.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Metternich to Bülow, June 3, 1902. (G.P. XVII, 209.)

<sup>3</sup> See Th. Schiemann, Deutschland und die Grosse Politik, I, 240.

# THE END OF BRITISH ISOLATION

article in the Kreuz-Zeitung for June 18, 1902. Schiemann was at this time high in the Kaiser's favour.

Metternich had nothing for which to thank his Secretary of State, but in Germany Richthofen's conduct was generally admired. The Hamburgischer Korrespondent of June 11 remarked that if it were true that the German statesman had thus expressed himself he was to be warmly commended. Nevertheless, the journal proceeded, the deportation of Saunders, so widely demanded, would, if carried out, be regrettable "because in England the worst calumnies are ignored on principle and, e.g., the notorious news agency which provides the anti-English German Press twice daily with its bad lies and incredible calumnies has been left undisturbed. But it is another question whether the Ministers and Secretaries of State in Berlin should treat a man of the qualities and inclinations of Mr. Saunders as fit to be received in good company. In any case, no English statesman would think of doing the same in this respect." Saunders made no mention of the Richthofen incident in his dispatches to The Times and all that came to Bell's ears was that a new campaign, earnest by German standards, had begun in the German Press. He promptly wired to Saunders en clair, intending it no doubt to be copied in Berlin before delivery: "Congratulate you on the attacks of the reptile Press, whose praise would be blame."1

There was nothing to which Walter and Bell attached more importance than respect for the dignity of the Foreign Correspondents of *The Times*. Their value as independent representatives of the Press depended upon the position which they were freely accorded by the régime and the public among whom they worked. In the case of Germany, *The Times* was not prepared to make an exception and allow the Wilhelmstrasse, or influential German organizations, to dictate the terms upon which a representative of the paper would be welcomed. And this new outbreak of friction between *The Times* Berlin Correspondent and the Germans was far from welcome to the office. The Foreign Department held firmly to the principle that, while it was the Correspondent's first duty to safeguard his independence, he must seize every opportunity to conciliate critics. And all this Saunders could be trusted to do. No more notice, therefore, was taken of the anti-Saunders campaign than the Correspondent appeared to attach to it. And he had not men-

<sup>1</sup> Bell to Saunders, June 12, 1902.

# ROTHSCHILD'S ATTEMPT TO TURN THE TIMES

tioned any details in his dispatches or in his private correspondence with the office.

The campaign was not a good augury for the success of any intervention on the part of *Haute Finance*. Unluckily for Count Metternich his conversation on the 2nd with the King took effect, virtually, on the day it became Bell's duty to wire Saunders congratulating him on the attentions bestowed upon him by the German "reptile Press." Within a week of Metternich's conversation, the King spoke to Alfred Rothschild about *The Times* and about Saunders, and Rothschild promised to see what he could do for Metternich. As on the similar occasion six months previously, when Sir Ernest Cassel had brought Metternich and Bell together at dinner, every effort was made to achieve success.

One day in June, 1902, Alfred Rothschild invited Bell to dinner. On this occasion the effort was more determined and more direct; Rothschild was able to say that the questions he proposed to ask had been suggested by an august person. Much talk concerning Anglo-German relations took place. The pros and cons of an "alliance" were thoroughly canvassed and personalities were discussed. The name of Saunders was doubtless mentioned. Bell agreed to ask the correspondent for a statement of his views. Accordingly, Saunders was communicated with. Bell wrote on June 13, 1902, telling him of the talks and of their importance in view of Rothschild's friendship with the King, and asked for an expression of his views, which he could incorporate in a letter of his own, since Rothschild wished for something in writing. Saunders received Bell's letter on the night of the 14th. He felt alarmed and answered it at once in a long statement which must be read in its entirety:

The moment is one for a decision which is of decisive importance for the future of the British Empire. The question is:—"Are we to ignore the whole tendency of German policy during the present reign, are we to pass a sponge over every indication of German plans and ambitions and to range ourselves definitely on the German side, accepting for ever the lead of the Foreign Office in Berlin, which is far more vigorous and alert (alas!) than ours, and which will take us in tow?

Consider, please, what this means. I take the least evil (though, God knows, it is serious enough) first. It means:

(1) The alienation of our immediate neighbour, France. Say against France what you will. I admit a great deal of it. But

<sup>1</sup> No memorandum of Bell's conversation with Rothschild survives.

# THE END OF BRITISH ISOLATION

there can at least be no manner of doubt that in all her folly (Dreyfus, &c.) France is a country and a nation whose ideas, whose ambitions, whose ideals we can understand and know the *limits* of. Chamberlain himself said this to me.

Germany the British public does not know. Dr. Busch knew it. Therefore, as Rosebery rightly said (I am told) the publication of Busch ['s Bismarck] in English [in 1898] was one of the most important events of the second half of the 19th century. In the light of Busch, whom I take as the partial interpretation, for all of you who do not know Germany, of German aims and methods, can you consent to place British foreign policy in German leading-strings? That is what it comes to. Look at Austria chafing under the yoke, but unable to break loose! Look at Italy, whose King revolts in his soul against the German Emperor's patronage! These Powers I do not blame. They can hardly do anything else. England does not need to enter into this bondage. She is too great, too old, too strong.

(2) It means permanent separation from Russia with the cunning, assiduous German broker ever between. Separation from Russia, you say, is in any case inevitable. Suppose, for argument's sake, that I grant it. Separation, war to the knife with Russia is far better, if it be on an *independent* basis, than subordination of Anglo-Russian relations to the Wilhelmstrasse. In the one case you have a struggle in which coute que coute, I, for one, back England. In the other I will not back you with a brass farthing. You will simply have to pay through the nose double blackmail to Germany and to Russia.

I speak dogmatically, perhaps. I cannot develop my argument in a letter. But I have sat for fourteen years watching every sign of the heavens here—my heart at home in England—; and my humble but firm verdict is:—Any arrangement, any policy, any tendency which caused England to make a final choice for Germany against Russia and France, would be a fatal, irrevocable step. The Times ought to and I trust, can, prevent it. In my opinion, the moment England has made it clear that she will not take this step, she will have Austria and Italy, even if they remain in the moribund Triple Alliance, on her side. They are our hereditary friends.

Germany is a new, crude, ambitious, radically unsound Power. I cannot enter into the unsoundness fully here. The artificial Army system, the pampered commerce and shipping, the Agrarian-industrial cleavage, the unfamiliarity with the perils of civilization—a thousand things, convince me that Germany, with all her phenomenal development, is radically unsound and unhealthy. We are still sound at the core. We can, if necessary, stand alone.

- (3) But one of the greatest objects of German endeavours is to detach us from America. (Rothschild's Berlin friend, Dr. Paul Schwabach1 of [the] Bleichröder [Bank], once said to me: "You must inevitably quarrel with America.") This was put to me with singular imprudence at the German Foreign Office some months ago, when they renewed to me the proposal made to Chirol for an Anglo-German understanding. They said: (literally)—"It is the interest of Germany and England to combine as against Powers which, like Russia and America, are economically dangerous owing to their vast undeveloped resources."-A perilous fallacy! It is Germany's interest to drag England into such a combination. It is not at all our interest to enter into it. We. too, are a Power with vast undeveloped resources in territory. wealth and political future. Let us ally ourselves, or at least march in line with the living, not with those who are walking in grave-clothes. Above all, let us not alienate ourselves from our American brethren—bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh! It comes to that. Sir Martin Conway tells me that all American naval officers consider that their young navy is being trained to meet Germany, if necessary. So ought ours to be.
- But (4) the *insistence* of these German overtures to you, to Chirol and to me is easily explicable (to me at least). Germany is face to face with a crisis. Her Imperial Revenue is at a standstill, her Imperial Expenditure increasing by leaps and bounds. If she had to engage in a struggle for life or death, Prussia, at least, would no doubt give the shirt from her back or even the skin from her body. In 1812 [sc. 1813] people gave their wedding rings and wore iron ones. They are accustomed, by memory, to sacrifices such as Englishmen have not been called upon to make since the Civil Wars. But it would not avail against us. So far as Germany is concerned, we hold the keys of the Atlantic Ocean and indeed of all the Seven Seas. Let us keep them! Germany is a parochial Power and, if we are firm and not foolish, will remain so.

My Foreign Office friends here said: "Geographically, England belongs to the Continent of Europe." That is quite false. We do not belong to the Continent of Europe. We are set in the sea, and our highways are on the sea, and if we are to remain a first-class Power—not to speak of the first Power—we must keep this steadily in mind. The reaction against Gladstone—Granville was good. But it had the fault of its virtue, in that it attempted to cultivate Continental, particularly German relations, simply in order to be able to say that we had them. That was vanity of vanities. As the German proverb says:—"The strong man is strongest standing alone!"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For Schwabach see Appendix, p. 830.

#### THE END OF BRITISH ISOLATION

I know the power of German influence dynastic, racial, &c., including the Rothschilds. It is not business. It is dining, shooting, toasts, finance, honours, marriages, dynastic friendships. It is not hard steel, like Joe Chamberlain, or even Lansdowne. It is not English.

There is no temptation of this kind in the case of France, because France is a somewhat shabby new Republic. Yet France is France, and we shall always, I hope, keep in touch there. There is no temptation in the case of Russia, because it is distant, reactionary, autocratic, superstitious, uncivilized, impossible. But there is temptation in the case of Germany, because there is a flashy schoolboy of an Emperor, a vast, though mostly impoverished nobility, snobbishness like that of Thackeray's Vanity Fair (not like Modern England's foibles and vices), an army with a record and a system, dynasties allied (what a tragedy!) by marriage; education (artificial to a degree and, believe me, also essentially unsound—see my letters to [Sir M. E.] Sadler in Vol. IX of his Special Reports) and so forth, and so forth. It is not business. It is cant, talk, appearances. America, far away and above all, is business and sound, in racial and national policy.

I summarize my essentials of British Foreign policy as follows:-

- (1) Absolute independence of Germany. No closer relations with Germany than with France. Friendliness, politeness, where friendliness is impossible, but above all alertness and political aloofness. (Social and intellectual relations as many as you like!
- (2) Friendly, neighbourly relations with France, such as we have generally had. There is no fear now of sentimentality on either side. Honest appreciation. France has become bourgeois (so unpicturesque!) but also has become sensible, prudent, cautious in her old age. Yes it is so, in spite of Fashoda and Dreyfus. She could not have survived either episode without a war, if she had not learned some wisdom. I see it in all the Frenchmen I meet. They are no longer moqueurs, they are students.
- (3) Above all we must go hand in hand with America in good and in evil fortune. This is absolutely essential. The K[ing], I fear, has been influenced by the Emperor's horror of democracies, of Republics,—fears, perhaps, that England might become one. It is vana et insana cura. We are a "crowned republic" and are, for that very reason, nearly as absolutely the servants and liegemen of our King as the Americans are of their President. Let anybody try to slight or insult the President of the United States, and see how Americans will act! I do hope that the King knows where his true strength lies. I admit all the other loyal ties. I am half a Stuart myself, and my forbears fought for Prince Charlie. But he has to carry the "Commonwealth men" with him as well. He can, if he likes. He does to-day, because his mother did. He must not alienate them by "suffering the old King under any

# SAUNDERS'S "PRISE-DE-POSITION"

name." If he tries that for one moment, he will awaken a volcano. Let him keep the German Emperor and Prince Henry at arm's length, if he means to be a true English King, the head of our "crowned Republic"! The Tsar is a far more democratic sovereign than the Emperor.

(4) A steady object of British policy ought to be the ultimate settlement of our relations, territorial and political, with Russia Very gradual it must doubtless be. We may have to fight Russia. If so, God speed us! But settle up we must and can. I, for one, hope for a peaceful, though tedious and very gradual settlement. Entanglements with Germany will do more than anything else to prevent it.

I will now speak very frankly, because you have told me all and have asked the opinion of me, your subordinate. I regret that you told Alfred Rothschild that you would give him your decision in writing. You must keep your promise. But, if you can, I implore you, give your arguments, not your decision, in writing. What you write will go the German Emperor. He wants to explore your counsels. He has no right to do this. His own are unsearchable. The Times, like England, must remain free and unfettered. They want to bind both England and you.

Never mind my fate, please. I am a soldier in the ranks. It does not in the least matter. I feel like a scout who has got through the enemy lines with the result of his observations. It does not matter if a last long shot hits him, if he only gets his message to headquarters. Besides it is not even so tragic as that. I don't think that they are going to expel me, and—if they do (barring the interests of *The Times*)—let them expel and be damned! I shall have bread to eat for myself and my children, even if you have not a corner somewhere else to employ me in.

My final word is:—Believe me, this extraordinary pressure on the K[ing] and on you is due to the desperate straits in which Germany at present finds herself—as e.g. (1) an insoluble economic problem at home: Agrarian v. Industrialist.

- (2) No statesman at her disposal. Bülow, by universal consent, a perfect imposition and mountebank.
- (3) The Emperor a wayward boy (at 44!) with the vastest of ambitions, altogether out of proportion to his means.

Insane jealousy on his part of England, even of the Coronation Ceremony. He is sure to try some diversion, e.g. (1) a telegram virtually offering an alliance, or (2) a menace, or (3) some foolish pageant in Germany.

(4) Austria and Italy half estranged.

# THE END OF BRITISH ISOLATION

- (5) France coldly and cautiously polite.
- (6) Russia spying out all Germany's weaknesses, preparing also for a Tariff war.
- (7) America laughing in her sleeve at Emperor's foolish over-tures.
  - (8) Colonial enterprises, especially China, a fiasco.
  - (9) Financial difficulties looming large on horizon.

Total result:—A desperate desire to make a last bid for England. Lesson for England:—Reserve, aloofness, especially as we have great and purely British tasks before us.

Goodnight. It is 2.30 a.m. I feel sure, not cocksure, but *sure* of the rightness of what I say.<sup>1</sup>

This clear analysis of Anglo-German relations, though jotted down at speed late at night to suit Bell's convenience, may stand as a monumental statement of the correspondent's position. Nothing remains to indicate the action taken on receipt of Saunders's case against the alliance. It was no doubt used as the basis for a letter from Bell to Rothschild, who, doubtless, passed it on. Bell answered Saunders's statement by reporting to him the substance of his conversation<sup>2</sup> with Metternich at Sir Ernest Cassel's in December, 1901, when he insisted to the Ambassador that, so far as the interests of the countries were similar, no question of an alliance, bound to appear provocative to other Powers, need arise; and so far as they were dissimilar it was out of the question. The Germans, who in January were about to propose the blockade of the Venezuelan ports, had manifested their desire to push Britain into conflict with the United States, but Bell told Metternich that nobody here could imagine a war with America over trade, or anything else. The correspondence led Saunders to add to the account given a week or ten days earlier regarding the campaign against him. He now described for Bell his encounter with the Secretary of State at Posadowsky's.

The office received details of the incident with surprise that a man of Richthofen's character, breeding and profession should lose his temper in public. When Chirol, who was absent from P.H.S. at the time, heard the news he gave it as his opinion that Richthofen was only indirectly to blame. The source was, as ever in Chirol's view, Bülow and his Press people.

I am convinced Richthofen would not have been guilty of this piece of unmannerly impertinence had he not been instructed to take

<sup>1</sup> Saunders to Bell, June 14, 1902.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 341-3, supra.

## "THE TIMES AN INTERNATIONAL DANGER"

this course by Bülow. The comments of the German papers are even more offensive than Richthofen's language. One phrase which constantly recurs is evidently a mot d'ordre of the Press Bureaunamely, that the influence of The Times has gone down so much in England that its hostility to Germany has not the same importance as it would have had years ago.1

Bell's support of Saunders was hearty. He encouraged him by another wire sent en clair and thus available to the German telegraph clerks and the Foreign Office. He also adroitly protected him from being involved in a mere personal squabble by inventing an excuse for the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs:

Entirely approve in every respect your telegrams and more particularly your demeanour towards Baron von Richthofen, whose temporary forgetfulness of courtesy to his guest was possibly due to indisposition. Bell.2

Not surprisingly, nothing more was heard of the intervention of "high finance." Saunders remained at his post and continued his work. The correspondent's personal position became more and more uneasy. He was surrounded by men as keenly critical of himself as he was of their policy. At home there were not lacking critics of The Times who regarded its general tendency as dangerous. Metternich reported on June 15 to Bülow that he had been talking to one whom he rightly regarded as one of Britain's coming statesmen. He had recently seen Mr. Asquith, who, he said, coupled Saunders with Steed as mischief-makers. He

condemns most severely the attitude of the correspondents of The Times and in particular the continual endeavour of the Berlin and Vienna correspondents to represent everything in Germany as anti-English.... He sees—and I am afraid he is right—in the intrigues of The Times an international danger, since English-German relations were being poisoned in a way which might have serious consequences in the future. It is to be concluded from Mr. Asquith's remarks that The Times policy of mischief-making has already had its effects in England.3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chirol to Bell, June 18, 1902; reference to the paper's declining influence may be found in the German Press of a decade earlier. But it is likely that Bülow had now finally made up his mind that *The Times* thrived on the sort of criticism he had been fostering. (Cf. his reply to Metternich below.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bell to Saunders, June 16, 1902.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Metternich to Bülow, June 15, 1902. (G.P. XVIII, 210.) A later liberal estimate was given by Sir Edward Grey: "The influence of men like Chirol and Saunders did indeed affect English opinion, but it was discounted by many people as being inspired by prejudice. We now know that the line they took sprang from knowledge. Sir Valentine Chirol still lives to appreciate the compliment Bülow paid him, and to enjoy our esteem, but a cond prove of him and to enjoy our esteem, but a good many of his countrymen owe some apology to the memory of Mr. George Saunders for having underrated his sincerity and knowledge." Edward Grey, Twentyfive Years (London, 1925), Vol. II, p. 48.

#### THE END OF BRITISH ISOLATION

Bülow's answer was not in his suavest manner:

It may be left an open question whether the paper desires to cause war with Germany or is only working with an aim towards intimidation. In any case, through its attitude there has been created on both sides a feeling most undesirable and detrimental to the interests of both Empires. . . . I shall see to it that renewed attempts at mischief-making by *The Times* are opposed, as occasion arises, with determination and cold bloodedly (*kaltblütig*); but to identify English public opinion with *The Times*, and to give the paper, in that way, an undue background, is to be avoided.<sup>1</sup>

The Chancellor's promise "to see to it that renewed attempts at mischief-making by *The Times* are opposed" had a threatening sound. But he had a motive for avoiding more newspaper recriminations.

There would, once more, be no open break with The Times for the present. Bülow was not in a position to secure the correspondent's recall so long as Saunders had the confidence of P.H.S.: nor would it do to expel him. To ignore the man and his newspaper would be the better plan. The Germans had not played their cards well. At the time Metternich, with extremely powerful support, was endeavouring to turn The Times round, Richthofen should rather have followed that line. There was no real reason, so far, to conclude that The Times, critical as it might be of German policies and methods, was committed to opposition of German ambitions as a principle. Neither Buckle nor Bell regarded the Germans as Britain's enemy, actual or potential. Bell had all his life preferred Germans to Frenchmen. Though he regarded both as races inferior to his own he rated the Teutonic virtues high above those of the Latin peoples. He might almost be ranked with the pro-Germans, who, in 1902, sought to take a policy that was absolutely justifiable for any Englishman. But neither he nor anybody else in P.H.S. believed that it was to the interest of Britain to enter into an alliance with Germany, least of all on German terms. The office was none the less unanimous regarding the general policy of abstention from special arrangements with Western Powers. The alliance with Japan made anything of the kind less appropriate. It was necessary, merely, to remain on as good terms as possible with Germany and France and thus balance Russia.

Friendship with Russia being a matter for the future, resistance to her aggression was to be made secure, with the assistance of a third party. Chirol and Morrison were, at this

<sup>1</sup> Billow to Metternich, June 24, 1902. (G.P. XVIII, 213.)

#### ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE WELCOMED

time in broad agreement on the Far Eastern question. Chirol, it is true, altered the text of Morrison's dispatches because he thought their publication impolitic. Naturally, this explanation did not always reconcile Morrison to such treatment of his messages. At the beginning of 1902, perhaps, the first signs may be discerned of a divergence, doctrinal in character, but as yet insignificant in scale. The basis of Morrison's divergence was his belief in the reality of signs, admittedly faint, of an awakening in China. The Times, in a leading article noted his optimism, but expressed reluctance to support the view that any true revival of China existed, or—and this was significant—was possible. (January 22, 1902.)

The mind of *The Times* was wholly made up. It was only half recognized before the Boer War that the protection of British interests in the Far East made it necessary to secure an Eastern ally. The need became increasingly insistent as the war lasted. Salisbury had tried and had failed to come to terms with Russia. For three years Chirol had watched the British Government consistently weakening in the face of Russian pressure. No attempt to bring in Germany as a counter-weight could, as he understood, succeed, for she would never alienate Russia by opposing her in China. The Yangtze Treaty of 1900 was a warning.<sup>1</sup>

In such a situation Chirol's recognition, since 1896, of Japan as England's aid against Russia was important. The conversation he had with Ito in Tokyo in 1900 thus had special significance. For several years a steady flow of argument in The Times prepared influential British circles for what still seemed to the public a surprising connexion. An Anglo-Japanese Alliance was in sight. Whereas in 1895, the Japanese had been presented to Englishmen as aggressive, cruel, excessively ambitious and actively hostile to foreigners, The Times began in 1896 to modify this verdict and by 1899 news of a proposal to launch a Russian loan in London led to criticism of the policy of lending money which could only be used against British interests; and, instead, financial assistance to Japan was advocated. "Japanese interests in the Far East run parallel with our own." (May 27, 1899.) Misunderstandings over the Yangtze Treaty involved Japan as well as Great Britain, for Japan had adhered to it and, like England, held that its value depreciated greatly if Manchuria were excluded. The Times again seized the opportunity to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The agreement confirmed Chirol's distrust of Bülow. Indeed, although the German Chancellor's public announcement in March, 1901, that Manchuria was outside the agreement, came as a shock and surprise to Lansdowne, it was neither to Chirol. Saunders had reported as early as October 25, 1900, when the Treaty was published, that the instrument had a limited scope.

#### THE END OF BRITISH ISOLATION

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suggest closer cooperation with Japan and insisted upon an investigation to discover whether the Japanese misunderstanding had been due to defective information from the British side. (March 26, 1901.) The visit in January, 1902, of Count Ito to England provided Chirol with an occasion of himself writing a leading article discussing the present position and future prospects of Japan in terms of the warmest sympathy. (January 4, 1902.)

At last the announcement of the Alliance was greeted in The Times by Chirol. "Nowhere in the world," he wrote, "is there to be found at the present hour a more inexhaustible field for all those forms of peaceful activity without which this great commercial and industrial Empire of ours cannot be maintained than in China." He went on to praise the Japanese, contrasting (it is interesting to observe) the humane and disinterested behaviour of Japan at the time of the suppression of the Boxers with the action of Russia. A treaty with Japan threatened no one and upheld the policy to which all were pledged—this referred, no doubt, to the "Open Door" policy, to which, on the invitation of the United States, all the interested Powers had announced their adhesion, Russia alone equivocating. Chirol reviewed the effect of the Treaty on other Powers seriatim, and finally distinguished Russia, which, in veiled terms was described as the adventurer. who formerly encouraged by British vacillation would now be faced firmly. "We believe that a clear and definite statement of our policy . . . can only tend in the long run to promote a satisfactory understanding" with Russia. (February 12, 1902.) It was thought in London, as elsewhere, that the mere size of Russia somehow made her if not invulnerable at least unconquerable. The internal conditions of some cities and certain parts of the country were known to be so unsettled as to favour the resort to nationalistic diversions which might well endanger British interests which, however, the Anglo-Japanese Treaty could not fail to protect. In 1902 it did not appear that any extension of this departure from "splendid isolation" would be called for. All talk of an Anglo-German "alliance" had been abandoned; and rightly. But there were consequences.

# XIII

# THE ANGLO-FRENCH ENTENTE AND GERMAN PRESSURE, 1902-1905

business Britain had in hand was the outcome of the decision to refuse an alliance with Germany on German terms. Germany herself was occupied with conversations with her allies, Austria and Italy. It was known, as Saunders reported to Bell, that the two Powers resented the German trick of using them for her sole benefit. Slowly, too, it was being realized that the alliance between England and Japan strengthened the material resources of the British Empire at a point where hitherto it had been imagined that German support was extremely desirable, if not indispensable. In all the circumstances, the renewal, when it came, of the Triple Alliance evoked expressions of deep satisfaction throughout Germany.

The strength, however, of the renewed Triple Alliance was still no greater than before, or so great as German policy required. The Austrians were indifferent partners. The Italians, having their attention fixed upon the Mediterranean, interpreted its terms in a sense of their own. The Times printed full commentaries on the reception of the Treaty, telegraphed from Berlin, Vienna and Rome. It fell to the experienced Vienna Correspondent, as representing The Times at a Capital of unique importance at this period, to deal with the Treaty at greatest length. He was qualified by fifteen years' residence in the Capital as Correspondent of The Daily Telegraph before his appointment in 1892, on the recommendation of Lord Rosebery, to The Times. William Lavino<sup>1</sup> was about to be succeeded in Vienna by Wickham Steed. He was a Manchester man, of Dutch extraction. He knew Germany well, had lived in Berlin and had enjoyed the acquaintance of Bismarck and Bleichröder. He had maintained correspondence with Moritz Busch, with whom he negotiated on behalf of Bell the translation rights of his memoirs of Bismarck which The Times brought out in English. Lavino had long believed that Britain might one day be squeezed between pan-Slavism and pan-Germanism; he now held the more matter-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For Lavino's earlier career, see *supra*, pp. 140-1; for Steed's movements, see *supra*, p. 293.

of-fact conviction that the future of Britain immediately depended upon the policy she took up towards Germany and the means she was prepared to take to make it effective Through Busch, Lavino acquired an insight into German diplomatic methods of incalculable value to a correspondent in a Capital regularly used by Berlin for the advancement of the interests of a Triple Alliance dominated by Germany. The Vienna post required great knowledge of European and Middle Eastern politics and tact in the expression of opinion both in speech and in print. Lavino was a correspondent of outstanding sensibility and receptiveness. He attracted and preserved a remarkably wide diplomatic and journalistic acquaintance, the possession of which enabled him regularly to communicate in private letters information of substantial value to the office. With Wallace he had complete sympathy. His stay in Vienna had convinced Lavino that Austria was doomed to dissolution. The nationalist factors driving towards internal conflict were strong; they were reinforced by dynastic difficulties, and in addition class-warfare, anti-semitism and, finally, religious controversy. The outlook, he reported to Wallace in 1899, was dark; the country was heading for revolution. Secondly, after long reflection, Lavino believed in 1902 that Britain should cultivate Russia. In those days, Lavino's view of the importance of cultivating Russian friendship was singular. In the office only Wallace had the same outlook. As a corollary, Lavino believed in the desirability of transforming the traditional British attitude towards France. He held these views at a time when the hostility of Britain and Russia, and Britain and France, were axiomatic in European diplomatic circles generally. Lavino's experience forced him to recognize that German hostility towards Britain was deep; and that it was no passing phase. Its origins did not lie on the surface, certainly not in a chivalrous championship of the small and peaceable Boer State against a powerful and aggressive England. Rather it was due to a profound jealousy of the great British Empire, simply because it was great and British. Before the nineteenth century finally closed, Lavino recognized the completeness of Britain's isolation and the determination of Germany to exploit it. For years he had discussed with French friends the desirability of their strengthening the Russian alliance by an understanding with Britain. He had lamented the lack in several quarters at home, and in the Paris office, of support for such an idea.

Blowitz' conception of international affairs made him less concerned than Lavino to exploit opportunities for the



WILLIAM LAVINO

# LAVINO SUCCEEDS BLOWITZ IN PARIS

improvement of Franco-British relations. However, he must be given the credit for prophesying in 1900 that both countries would see the necessity to adjust their differences. But Blowitz after thirty years' service was old; his health was not good; his style had long been considered by Bell, Wallace and Chirol to be out-of-date. An operation for cataract left the Manager with no choice but to retire him.

In August, 1902, it was arranged that Lavino should replace Blowitz in Paris at the end of the year. The change was more than a personal one; it marked the end of a journalistic epoch and the beginning of a new political orientation. Lavino's record in Vienna had picked him out for consideration as a candidate for the Paris post. He was 56 years old and had served The Times in a Capital that notoriously required a Correspondent possessed of the greatest tact and discretion. He was known to possess many friends in influential political circles in Paris. Lavino's policy was at last recognized as a final recommendation. He was known in P.H.S. and elsewhere for the positiveness with which he held the view that German ambitions left her neighbours, Russia and France, no alternative but to make a defensive alliance. With that grouping Lavino believed Britain should associate herself. Fortunately, Lavino's own resources (he was well acquainted with Eugène Etienne, the influential deputy for the Oran, who became Minister for the Interior and later War Minister in the Rouvier Cabinet of 1905-6) enabled him to meet Delcassé, with whose policy and Etienne's he was in strict accord. In the meantime, British relations with France were improving. Lord Lansdowne secretly discussed Morocco with Delcassé in the summer of 1902 and the fact was known to The Times and published in February, 1903. Lavino, who had met Delcassé in December, 1902, was presented to President Loubet in May, 1903.

Meanwhile Anglo-German relations remained more correct than cordial. The war with the Boers was over; but so were the talks with Germany. The atmosphere, it was hoped here, would improve with the passage of time and the absence of shocks. It was known that the Germans were endeavouring to improve their relations with Russia, and it was thought that they were inclined to exaggerate their successes in St. Petersburg. At the beginning of September a party including Mr. Brodrick, Secretary of State for War, and Lord Roberts, Commander-in-Chief, left London at the invitation of the Kaiser to attend the German manoeuvres. The invitation was neither given nor accepted without public apprehension, which *The Times* did not

share. It was natural, the paper thought, that the prolonged campaign of wanton slander against the British Army should have aroused deep resentment in this country. But "His Majesty has taken the first important opportunity which has presented itself since the end of the war to do a marked courtesy to the army which conducted it." The Times affirmed that it would be churlish to reject such an amende honorable, rendered as it was with much grace and good feeling. The article met with a mixed reception in the German press. The report that the Emperor would receive a party of Boer generals now touring Holland occasioned great excitement both in Germany and Britain which the silence of Berlin did nothing to allay. In London it was feared that the report might not be without foundation. That the Boer generals desired to be received became known. Saunders telegraphed on September 29 an extract from the semi-official Post which indicated that there were no difficulties in the way and that public opinion in Germany acclaimed the generals. The Berliner Lokalanzeiger regarded it as impossible that the audience should have the effect of giving umbrage in England. Informed circles in London, however, had no doubt that the giving of an audience could bear only a highly disagreeable interpretation. As a visit from the Kaiser was expected in December, as part of the celebration of the King's birthday, it was desired that a cordial atmosphere should prevail. In the new circumstances, The Times viewed the prospects of the visit with misgivings. An audience given to the Boer generals must inevitably postpone it. The Berlin Post insinuated that The Times desired to have the list of persons who were to be received by the German Emperor submitted for its approval; but a German Sovereign was master in his own house. At this point Bell intervened with the German Chargé d'Affaires in London. He called at Eckardstein's house in Grosvenor Square. Finding him absent, he wrote:

Very Private and Confidential

October 1, 1902.

My dear Baron Eckardstein,

I know that you must be anxious to do whatever can be done to restore, so far as is now possible, the good feeling between England and Germany, and I feel that you will not misunderstand my motives.

May I beg you to use whatever influence you may possess either to prevent the Boer generals being received by your Emperor, or to prevent the latter coming to England.

I am not an alarmist but I cannot speak too emphatically when I say that if both these events occur, there will be absolute disaster. I have never in the whole course of my experience known feelings so strong, and—what is to me more serious—more restrained in the firm belief that it cannot be true. Nor is this, as generally, among the lower

#### BELL APPEALS TO ECKARDSTEIN

classes only. There was language used to-day by elderly opulent city men, that, at the time of the raid, was only used by the lower classes—and some idea of what people are feeling may be gathered from the fact that some of us are concerting serious measures to prevent disturbance.

Remember that I defended—and still defend—the Emperor's telegram to Kruger. I think, of course, it was injudicious, but I saw no other treason in it. I am not therefore prejudiced, nor an alarmist, but if the two things happen, believe me you will not be long without regretting it for the sake of both countries.

Yours very truly, C. F. Moberly Bell.

Eckardstein, on getting this letter, which was forwarded to him in the country, immediately returned to town. He wired Bell to say that he would wire to Berlin, but reminded him that news of an intended reception was not official. "I shall certainly do my utmost to prevent reception," he added. Eckardstein duly sent the full text of Bell's letter to Bülow, who submitted it to the Kaiser. Talk of the reception was forthwith abandoned. Eckardstein was able to assure Bell that the plans had been changed:

Wednesday night, Turf Club, Piccadilly.

My dear Mr. Moberly Bell,

I am awfully sorry not to have been in town to-day. I should have liked so much to have a chat with you. It was too kind of you to come to Grosvenor Square this morning.

As you see now the reception has been abandoned once and for ever. You may be assured that the Emperor<sup>1</sup> is really a good and reliable friend of England, and if he is properly informed about things he will never do anything which might hurt the feelings of England.

I am just off to the country again, but shall be back in London again to-morrow.

If you have nothing better to do on Monday next, I should be delighted if you could give me the pleasure of dining with me at 13 Grosvenor Square, at 8.15.

Hoping that you are disengaged,

Believe me,

Yours very truly,

H. ECKARDSTEIN.

The Kaiser, who had planned to visit Windsor to join the King's birthday party, duly arrived. The Hohenzollern came to the Nore on November 8, 1902, and The Times welcomed him in a long and cordial leading article, in the course of which

<sup>1</sup> The underlining of this word in the original is probably not without significance.

the Emperor was instructed that Britain had emerged stronger rather than weaker from the war.

"The true version of the policy of the European Powers," the paper proceeded, "before and after the outbreak of the South African war will only be fully known when the Chancelleries have given up their secrets, and it is not our place or desire to anticipate the verdict of history." As a modest lesson from experience, The Times reflected that Britain had learnt that she could not, however, count upon the good will of certain nations and that if "we do not take a wary view of our own interests we can hardly expect others to be scrupulous about infringing them."

In the case of Germany we know that we are dealing with a Power which has never been chary of showing us that our Imperial interests conflict with hers; and hence the paramount need of a vigilant national policy. It must be a policy that leaves no corner of the world out of account, for at this very moment German action in China is furnishing us with an indication that Germany is prepared to push her advantage unflinchingly, even in regions where her interests are very far from predominating. . . . At the same time, no feeling of hostility will interfere with the cordial reception of the German Emperor in this country . . . and our recollection of the outburst of German hostility in the course of the past two years does not seriously affect our appreciation of the great qualities of the Emperor. . . . We shall hope to live on good terms with Germany and shall try to bear in mind that the brusquerie of her diplomatic methods is experienced by others as well as by ourselves. But the easy-going, indolent confidence into which we are too ready to lapse must be out of place in dealing with a Power whose readiness to wound has been so clearly shown and whose patient watchfulness to seize upon every advantage, great or small, will not be relaxed in return for any amount of complaisance on our part. (November 10, 1902.)

Throughout that autumn and early winter secret conversations, as the paper hinted, were taking place in "the Chancelleries." Towards the end of January, 1903, when Cambon was invited, as a matter of routine, to Windsor, the King took the opportunity to discuss Morocco. The Ambassador embraced the chance to allude to the activities, which he described as "mischievous," of Harris and the rest of the English in the country, who gave so much encouragement to the childish ideas of the Sultan.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cambon to Delcassé January 29, 1903. (D.D.F. 3ème série, p. 66.) The French Minister at Tangier's friendly attitude towards the British Minister, Sir Arthur Nicolson; and his and Sir Arthur's disapproval of the attitude of *The Times* correspondent are described in St. René Tallandier to Delcassé, March 10, 1903. (D.D.F. 3ème série, p. 131.) For Harris see below, p. 410.

#### CHIROL ON THE JAPANESE ALLIANCE

Nor did the wishes of the French regarding the relations of Britain and Russia seem to prosper. The Times did nothing to assist Russia. But this did not mean that the office was in favour of extreme measures by Japan. The fullest exposition of Chirol's views is given in a letter of May, 1903, in which he explained to Morrison why he could not favour the latter's policy of encouraging Japan to fight.

Your telegrams about Manchuria have shown up Russian diplomacy on this occasion even more effectually perhaps than on former occasions. and I don't think you need apprehend, as your message of the 15th indicates, that even in official quarters any faith is put in Russian denials or assurances. But formally they have to be accepted, unless action is to follow words. At present action is almost out of the question. We are only just out of the throes of a long war which has severely taxed our resources. Opinions differ widely as to the value of Brodrick's schemes of army reorganization, but even those who believe in them admit that time must be allowed for them to be worked out properly. K's reports on the condition of the Indian army this is extremely confidential—are not satisfactory. He himself told me in India he would want two years of peace at least before he could take it into the field with any degree of confidence. The country would not stand another war just at present without proof of urgent necessity, and certainly not about Manchuria. We must have time to get our finances straightened out again, and to advance the settlement of S.A. Moreover, though the Franco-Russian alliance is not so hot as it was, and the French are evidently anxious to "reinsure" themselves by coming to some sort of arrangement with us, this evolution has not yet proceeded far enough to afford any security against a rush of popular excitement in France if war were to break out now between England and Russia. In these circumstances we are bound to handle the situation in Manchuria with great caution, and if, as I believe, it is important for us to avoid war, we must do our best to avert the crisis being precipitated by Japan. You say that Japan is ready and eager for war. I cannot say that that is borne out by what I hear from Japan—at least with regard to eagerness. While from the military point of view war might suit Japan, Japanese statesmen, I understand, fully realise that war, even successful, would seriously endanger the financial and industrial situation. But even accepting your statement without reserve, I should be very sorry to give any encouragement to the idea that Japan was eager for war. Nothing would injure the Japanese alliance in this country more than the suggestion that Japan was going to lug us into an unpopular war. If, as I hope, the Japanese alliance is to be permanent, it must be hoped that the first quinquennial period will strengthen and not weaken the belief of the British public in the peacefulness and moderation of Japan. It is generally understood here, and it is the impression I gained, during my last visit.

especially, to Japan, that she would certainly fight to the last gasp for Korea, but not for Manchuria, and that she had come to the conclusion that though she might be able now to turn the Russians out of Manchuria after a square fight, she could not hold it permanently against them without ruining herself. Of course, I don't propose for a moment that we should leave the Japs in the lurch, or that we should do anything to create the suspicion that we were ready to neglect their interests for our own convenience. But I am particularly anxious not to offer them any encouragement to adopt a course in which it would be exceedingly awkward for us to have to follow them at this juncture.

I have written you at some length on this subject because I want you not only to understand why we thought it necessary to tone down to some extent your rather bellicose message of the 15th, but to be thoroughly acquainted with the considerations of general policy which govern our attitude towards the Manchurian question.<sup>1</sup>

This letter was addressed to Peking. Whether Morrison received it does not appear, for on May 30, 1903, he was expelled. In the Chinese Capital, where, in the words of William II, "the Czar was Prince," it was alleged that The Times telegrams were hostile to Russia and it was argued that what was anti-Russian must be pro-Japanese. There were those at home who said that The Times was pressing for war.2 At the time, it is true, the defence of India was much in the public eye and the Military Correspondent's articles in The Times argued the need for a British "continental" army to be ready to fight [against Russial on the N.W. Frontier. There were other pretexts available to those who were determined to prove that The Times was anti-Russian even in Europe. During 1903, The Times Correspondent at St. Petersburg was expelled. The Correspondent was D. D. Braham, not long down from New College, Oxford, and lately assistant to Saunders. He had given prominence to the horrors of the pogroms and to reports of revolutionary tendencies. On March 22, 1903, Braham reported to Chirol that Sir Charles Scott had that morning warned him "to be very careful in sending news about riots and about the revolutionary movement in general. He admitted that, in his opinion, the state of things was very serious" and that the Ministry of the Interior was about to take steps to order Correspondents "on pain of exposing themselves to considerable danger" to cease corresponding on such subjects. Chirol replied on the 25th:

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Morrison, May 25, 1903. (F. 4/807.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Cf. A. Chéradame, Le monde et la guerre russo-japonaise (Paris, 1906), pp. 117, 155.

#### BRAHAM EXPELLED FROM RUSSIA

You have certainly given no excuse for legitimate offence so far, and you should rather be commended for your moderation and caution. I trust and feel confident you will continue to display these qualities, for as you know, we never wish our Correspondents to place themselves needlessly in antagonism to the country and the people with whom they have to deal. Moreover, so long as you convey to us full information, we can always use it in some form which will not directly compromise you. Any attempt to hold a correspondent responsible for all that appears in his paper would simply show that it was futile to have a correspondent at all. At the same time, I can hardly believe that any serious measures are likely to be taken, at any rate in your case. No attempt was ever made to interfere with Dobson. who never shrunk from unpalatable truths. I cannot help thinking Sir C. S. was merely trying to overawe you in order to curry favour with his friends and show them the "influence" he possesses. Probably one of them said it would be very gratifying if means could be found to prevent "exaggerated" statements being published as to those recent troubles, and Sir C. S. at once fastened upon this as offending him, and welcomed the opportunity of doing another grovel. . . . 1

In the ensuing weeks the Russian administration made renewed complaints of Braham's "exaggerations." The British Ambassador chose to withhold support from *The Times* and the Russians decided that at a convenient opportunity the correspondent should be expelled. Without warning Braham was arrested on May 28, 1903, by a minor police official, who conducted him to the nearest police-station. He was there kept prisoner, permission at first being refused him to send a message to his family. Braham was shown a telegram from the Prefecture that he was to be immediately arrested, lodged in the transit prison and expelled the country par étapes. The effect of this order would be to convey the correspondent from station to station with batches of common criminals until the frontier was reached. At the instant of being marched off to prison, and with this to follow, the arrival of a new message permitted the correspondent to communicate with the Ambassador. Later he was liberated on signing a promise to leave by the first available train. correspondent immediately telegraphed to the Manager of The Times that he was being expelled and was seeking the advice of the Ambassador. Bell at once communicated with Wallace and on the 29th The Times printed at the head of the foreign news a notice that:

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Braham. (F. 4/730.) Braham's opinion of Scott was that "he is about the weakest man I ever knew and allows himself to be treated by the F.O. here in a way to which no representative of his Majesty should submit." (Braham to Chirol, March 22, 1903.) Dobson was Braham's predecessor.

We have received a telegram from our Correspondent at St. Petersburg stating that he has been ordered by the Russian Government to leave Russian territory. The order as originally signified to him was that he was to quit St. Petersburg last night, but by the good offices of his Majesty's Ambassador he has been allowed three days' grace to make domestic arrangements before leaving.

A leading article in the same issue expressed the irritation of the journal at this affront to its correspondent, "unprecedented within our experience." The Times was confident that the correspondent had not given the slightest justification for the issue of such an order. During the two years he had held the post he displayed "conspicuous judgment and moderation in the discharge of his responsible duties." He always treated international questions prudently and conciliatorily, and if there were features in Russian domestic policy which he could not overlook or minimize, his view has been shared by not a few thoughtful and patriotic Russians themselves.

The protests of *The Times* were without effect. Wallace informed Bell that little could be done for the moment:

As the incident has become public, and the British Ambassador has intervened, the Russian Ambassador here would certainly decline to put in his oar, and I don't see how the Russian Government can retreat from the foolish position it has hastily taken up. We must wait, therefore, as the Editor says, "until we are in possession of more detailed information." Still, I wanted to consult with you on the subject, and accordingly I called at the office a little before twelve o'clock, but you had gone !—to Epsom, I presume, like many other wicked people.1

The Times was not soothed by the arrival, later in the day, of Braham's dispatch telegraphed from Eydtkuhnen, on the German frontier. The correspondent explained that he had been sent for by the police, who told him that he was being expelled by order of General von Wahl, Assistant Minister of the Interior. The reason given was his "hostility to the Russian Government and the invention of false news." The Minister of the Interior (Plehve) informed Sir C. Scott that Braham was not objected to on personal grounds, that no particular objection was attached to any one dispatch. What was objected to was "the hostile tone of the correspondence, and of *The Times* in general." Plehve alleged that from the time of Braham's appointment as St. Petersburg

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wallace to Bell, May 29, 1902. Wallace invited Bell to send him a note to the Carlton. "I shall be dining either in the dining hall or in the restaurant at the table of Prince Blücher."

# RUSSIA DECLARES WAR ON THE TIMES

Correspondent, *The Times* had devoted itself to attacking Russia and Russian policy. The Government did not know whether the Correspondent was to blame for the policy, or the policy for the Correspondent, but they had made up their mind that *The Times* Correspondent was no longer to be tolerated in St. Petersburg. Their action, they knew, would provoke a great outburst in the British Press against Russia but they had weighed the consequences and were resolved to teach *The Times* a lesson. The paper's comment was restrained. It knew that freedom of speech, which it had never abused, was intolerable to despotic Governments. It criticized without fear or favour and its attitude would not change. The Russian action would not deprive the paper of the power to secure news from that country which was of public interest to Great Britain.

A leading article of June 6 written upon Braham's arrival in London emphasized the inadequacy of Sir C. Scott's representations: "The proper steps will be taken to lay the facts before the Foreign Office." In the time of Lord Dufferin or Sir Robert Morier the Russians would not have behaved as arbitrarily. The leader concluded by admitting that a good understanding with Russia was in the interests of both countries. The Novove Vremya quoted by the National Zeitung on June 8, 1903, announced that the Russian Government had expelled Braham because it desired to maintain with Britain the good relations which his correspondence was prejudicing, and expressed its confidence that the British Government would support its action. This, indeed, was the Russian official line. Lavino reported from Paris that for some time the Russians had been angry with The Times, whose tone was not calculated to pave the way to the London money market. "The French are beginning to feel uneasy at the enormous sum of French money already invested in Russia." And, proceeded Lavino, "the massacre of Kishineff Jews is not calculated to improve Russia's prospects of raising more loans."2 The Paris Press of the morning of June 29, 1903, gave prominence to a new Russian note complaining of The Times. The headlines: TWO POWERS, RUSSIA AND THE TIMES; WAR DECLARED, introduced the communiqué which objected to the publication of a summary of an article on the Kishineff massacres

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bell addressed Lansdowne on the subject. On June 8, a letter to the Editor, signed "Onlooker" (doubtless Chirol), followed the last leader. It gave instances of the inadequate diplomatic support afforded to British subjects by the Embassy at St. Petersburg. "Other and more general attacks upon the immemorial privileges of our fellow-countrymen in Russia may be expected if Lord Lansdowne does not effectively intervene."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lavino to Bell, June 5, 1902.

which had appeared in Die Zeit, of Vienna. The Russian Government stigmatized the article as "offensive" and alleged that it was originally written by The Times former correspondent in St. Petersburg. In fact Braham had been expelled before the summary of an article in Die Zeit was telegraphed by Steed. Lavino from Paris observed that the publication of the Russian note on the eve of the departure for London of President Louhet was proof that the leading part taken by The Times in promoting good feeling between the English and French peoples had not made the journal less objectionable in St. Petersburg, and that the selection of the moment of publication meant that Russia was, as might have been expected, fully determined, as a matter of policy, to discredit the paper. Printing House Square was deeply offended at the expulsion. "If that illuminated Government persists in its decree of expulsion against our correspondent." wrote Walter, "nothing will induce me to send out another." It was not out of the question that Germany might follow Russia and there was some concern for Saunders. It was firmly believed by Walter, Bell and Chirol that the Ambassador, Sir Charles Scott, had failed to impress Count Lamsdorff with the serious nature of an attempt to gag a London newspaper. The Times began to take an interest in revolutionary movements and to give publicity to accounts of their growing influence.1

Simultaneously, Morrison became one of the most hated men in official circles in Russia. When Lamsdorff complained to the British Ambassador, "of the London Times, which, he said, seemed to be inspired by irreconcilable hatred and suspicion of Russia," Scott merely replied that The Times seemed to wish to show itself better informed and "more capable of directing the foreign relations of the country than the Crown's responsible advisers." The information of The Times was not inferior to that available in official quarters and it was certainly fresher and obtained from sources that could be relied upon to check each other. Steed's telegrams, for instance, from Vienna threw new light upon German policy towards Russian ambitions in the East. In the autumn of 1903 Wallace was in St. Petersburg seeing Plehve, Kuropatkin and others.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See "The New Revolutionary Parties in Russia," September 3, 1903, which describes the development of the new Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party, and the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. Particulars are given of illegal publications, such as The Messenger of the Russian Revolution, The Cause of the People, Revolutionary Russia, &c.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Wallace to Bell, November 24, 1903 "... If the Emperor arrives in time I shall probably have an audience, but I cannot delay my departure on that account." (Wallace was due at Sandringham on the 30th to join in the celebrations of the Queen's birthday.)

## BRAHAM'S POST LEFT VACANT

Morrison, meanwhile, was encouraging Japan to stand up to the Russians. Great Britain could not allow Japan to be defeated, since that would be an acknowledgment of Russia's permanent and undisputed supremacy, "to the ultimate ruin of all our interests in China, if not in other parts of Asia too."1

A Russo-Japanese war, therefore, would be a huge gamble, embracing the probabilities, or at least the uncertainties, of a Japanese success with the danger of involving all Europe, to the ultimate gain only of Germany. In the course of time some of these hazards had become less serious. Later information brought the relative strengths of Russia and Japan into a little clearer light; and the Anglo-French entente was to create greater confidence. The informal discussions, however, had only begun when Braham was expelled and thereafter The Times (though it was represented) had not an "own" correspondent in St. Petersburg. For more than three years "diplomatic" relations were broken off and during much of this time The Times retaliated by severe indictments of the iniquities of the Russian tyranny.

The expulsion of Braham was a setback to the policy of rapprochement. The Times felt an injury rather than nursed a grievance. As Sir Horace Rumbold wrote to Bell in the same month, "I am pleased to see that, in spite of the discouragements of Kishineff and Finland, not to speak of measures of expulsion, The Times still holds to some understanding with Russia in the questions that divide us."2 Bell, indeed, was by this time a convert and was in correspondence with Lavino on the matter. But it was not Bell's way to ignore the expulsion of a Times correspondent. Braham enjoyed the complete confidence of his employers. The paper was not prepared to seek Russian courtesies after his expulsion or still less to give courtesies in return. Lavino answered the Manager that he would "do my best to help you with Russia and shall begin to make inquiries at once. I fancy the Russians have been very angry with The Times for months past, for not having supported the attempt to start a rapprochement with Russia"; but he admitted

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chirol to Morrison, August 25, 1903. (F. 4/842.) The attitude in 1902 of *The Times* towards France is worth noting. French ambitions in South China had earlier been one of the acutest causes of anxiety to Chirol. By 1902, however, Chirol had become sensitive to French susceptibilities. This is explained partly by the far greater menace of the Russian drive at the heart of China, partly by the changing character of British ambitions in the South and partly by the changing attitude towards France generally. Hence when Paul Cambon reported to his Government the public reception of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in England, he noted the generally friendly tone towards France—the *Daily Mail*, at this time persistently Francophobe, being the only exception. *The Times*, moreover, exercised on the whole a deliberately soothing influence in the Anglo-French differences with regard to Siam during 1902.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Rumbold to Bell, June 8, 1903. (P.H.S. Papers.)

that "so far as Russia was concerned, I always believed that the said movement was intended to pave the way to the London money market. They cannot get any more money in France." Much remained to be accomplished in that difficult quarter. In the meantime Russian activities did not pass without criticism. When it was known that the St. Petersburg post was vacant and the Manager received applications, he replied that a new man would not be sent out. "If ever they ask for the old one they shall have him, but no one else."

But the Japanese alliance was revolutionizing the situation. From the time of the signature of the original Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Chirol and Morrison were preparing themselves for the coming struggle between Japan and Russia which they regarded as inevitable. They recognized that it was their task to direct British sympathy towards the Japanese, even to the extent of giving armed assistance were it found to be necessary. But it is also clear that Chirol, much as he might have liked to see Japan defeat Russia, did not want war to be precipitated. On the other hand he did not fear it and had no doubt as to the victor. His Japanese friends were supremely confident that they could deal with the Russians on land. Chirol's only fear was that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance might fail to develop sturdily and quickly and that, in consequence, Japan might be glad to come to terms with Russia. It was possible, on the other hand, that Russia would not move for an indefinite time. She needed modern equipment and she was in need of finance.

The Russian need for money played a part in hastening the conclusion of an arrangement with France; and, finally, agitation in England for increases in the Royal Navy inspired the dispatch

¹ On August 6, 1903, M. Paul Cambon wrote to M. Delcassé about the troubles of the new Russian Ambassador, Count Benckendorff, who can never get a word out of Lansdowne. ("Sa conversation avec Votre Excellence [Delcassé, who had been here with the President] à York House à été pour lui comme un breuvage refraîchissant dans le Sahara politique où il s'agite à la recherche d'un sujet de dépêche.") Cambon then turns to the attitude of The Times towards Russia, and thinks the Russian Government may well wish to put a stop to it. Ever since the expulsion (which Cambon regards as unjustifiable) of The Times correspondent from St. Petersburg, "l'organe de la Cité" had taken a clever and cunning revenge by daily publishing disagreeable items about the disorder, corruption, &c., of the Russian Empire. The Russian Government has been moved recently to send an official communiqué to the whole Press (Russian?) contradicting certain allegations of The Times. But The Times continued to sting.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> But Bell did his best to get news out of Russia through subterranean sources. Steed conferred with "an old acquaintance of mine, Theodor Herzl," and a new recruit, Mr. Harold Williams, later Foreign Editor in succession to Steed, was sent to Stuttgart, the centre, with Geneva, of Russian émigré life. For a period Bell received occasional private reports from one McKenna in St. Petersburg, who employed the name "Justyn Paul" and who addressed himself to the "Manager, Messrs. Park Crescent and Co." in code; he later wrote from Riga. Early in 1904, The Times seems still to have been dependent upon a representative in St. Petersburg living under a pseudonym and corresponding through the medium of an elaborate code. Later a more regular, but still unofficial, representative was appointed; his services were not given exclusively to The Times.

#### ANGLO-FRENCH APPROACHES

of a Russian flotilla to Toulon in the autumn of 1903.1 The conclusion next year of the Russo-French mutual assistance agreement made a deep impression. Britain's intention to maintain the Mediterranean status quo was quickly made clear. As Rosebery put it to the Austrian Ambassador, "I do not recoil from the danger of war, but I must tell you frankly that if France should take sides with Russia it would be impossible for England to defend Constantinople against both Powers. In any case we should be unable to allow our Mediterranean fleet to run the risk of catastrophe by being caught between the Russian and the French fleets."

On June 30, 1903, Etienne came to London with an introduction from Lavino and saw Bell and Chirol. "He used to be Anglophobe before the *rapprochement*. I take a special interest in his conversion as I believe I contributed to it myself." The visit was welcome to the office, where German pressure was no longer underestimated. It was hoped that Etienne's forthcoming conversations with Lansdowne would not be unfruitful. President Loubet and M. Delcassé duly arrived in July.

But if The Times continued to regard German policy watchfully, it was by no means apprehensive. A leading article recognized the "unhasting, unresting" energy with which the country was following up the Kaiser's dictum that Germany's future lay on the water. The paper did not yet see in this aspiration any necessary menace, although he would be a poor sort of Englishman who failed to note its significance for his own country. It was not necessary to impute the intention to challenge England's supremacy on the seas. Rather the Navy Bills meant that, in any serious naval conflict in which England might hereafter be engaged Germany desired to occupy a position not unlike that which the Irish party always sought to occupy in the Imperial Parliament-a position in which she would be able to throw her influence into either scale, according as her interests were held to dictate at the time. A further consideration was the rapid expansion of German oversea commerce:

Nothing is more certain than that a nation which has a large maritime commerce and large colonial interests must be strong enough at sea to make its flag respected and to give its over-sea interests a security at least commensurate with their worth. (September 28, 1903.)

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<sup>1</sup> The London Press greatly disliked the visit of the Russian fleet to the Mediterranean. But, wrote Staal to Giers on November 17-29, 1903: "Au milieu de ces déclamations d'une sincérité douteuse, le journal The Times me paraît avoir choisi le moyen d'attaque, car c'en est pour lui, le plus pratique pour discréditer le gouvernement actuel. Depuis quelque temps. la feuille de la Cité a entrepris une campagne en règle contre l'Amirauté. Ainsi ... elle s'efforce de prouver qu'en présence des progrès rapides et du groupement des forces navales des autres pays, la marine britannique n'est plus en mesure de remplir son rôle et qu'elle risque de laisser péricliter la suprématie navalede la Grande-Bretagne." (Meyendorff, Staal II, 231-2.)

The article was written three months after the visit of President Loubet and Delcassé to London. In September preliminary soundings were being made by Cambon concerning the willingness of Britain to discuss the possibility of an understanding with France. The discussions themselves were, it was believed in the office, progressing satisfactorily. Towards the end of the year it became clear that moves towards new groupings of the Powers, tentative though they might be, would at least tend to the dissolution of the Triple Alliance and the isolation of Germany. Changes were in the air.

In Berlin, as elsewhere, it is recognized that the new relations of England, France, and Italy on the one hand, and the joint action of Austria and Russia in the Near East, have decidedly changed the atmosphere of European politics. . . . Germany seems just now to be a good deal more anxious for an "extra dance" with France's partner than that partner seems to be to oblige her. (November 5, 1903.)

But the possibility of a British "first dance" with Russia seemed far off. Equally, by the end of the year, hostility between Russia and Japan had deepened; by January the situation was anxious. The New Year, 1904, opened to the echo of war preparations. Britain's treaty with Japan left her still in a neutral role but she was not pro-Russian even in sentiment. embarrassed France, with whom Britain was still negotiating. The French Ambassador had reported on November 18, 1903. the difficulty of finding a formula for the Egyptian question. In January Paul Cambon had a conversation with Lansdowne on Far Eastern affairs, during which he assured Lansdowne that both Lamsdorff (Russian Foreign Minister) and the Czar desired peace with Japan, if only concessions could be made without offending Russia's amour-propre. But the Ambassador said that the English newspapers, The Times in particular, were making matters worse by saving that if Russia climbed down it would only be because she was afraid of war.1

The opening of war by Japan against Russia on February 8, 1904, doubtless had its effect in accelerating talks which would in any event, it appears, have reached the same result. On March 23 Delcassé informed Radolin, the German Ambassador, that the two Powers were occupied in discussing colonial questions. The French statesman's desire to secure the support of Britain, in addition to that of an ally occupied with a war to which she was known to have been egged on by Germany, was natural. Equally, in the view of the British Foreign Office, the upsetting of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Paul Cambon to Delcassé, January 24, 1904. (D.D.F. 3ème série, IV, No. 211.)

#### THE ENTENTE CORDIALE

the balance of power by the neutralization of Russian influence in Europe made necessary a new review of France's situation. Russian appreciation of Germany's underlying motives, and of her own position in Europe, was simultaneously manifested. Telegraphing from Berlin on the 23rd, Saunders reported that "The more friendly attitude of a section of the Russian Press towards England is apparently exciting some uneasiness in Berlin, and still more uncomfortable feelings are being aroused by the manner in which several Russian journals discuss the position of Germany. The article in the St. Petersburg Viedomosti, which was quoted on Monday in your Paris correspondence, is reproduced still more fully in the Kreuz-Zeitung's weekly survey of foreign politics, where it is pointed out that even Prince Mestchersky, of the Grazhdanin, has revoked his attacks upon England, as has also the influential Novoye Vremya." Characterizing the new Russian attitude to Germany as shameful, the Kreuz-Zeitung said:

The fact that between England and Germany there is no real opposition of interests such as divides England and Russia might very well facilitate an understanding ad hoc on the basis of a policy of reciprocal advantage. Germany and England, united in the combination of the Triple Alliance, would form the strongest offensive and defensive coalition which could at the present day be conceived or which has been known within the memory of man, a coalition in whose power it would lie to pronounce the final decision upon the destinies of the Near as well as of the Far East.

The German plan was plain; it was anti-Russian. Neither Britain nor France was now unaware of the fact. Their answer came a fortnight later when the two countries signed an agreement concerning Morocco and Egypt; the agreement was popularly known as the Entente Cordiale. In Europe it was expected that other agreements must follow.

The signature of the Franco-British entente on April 8, 1904, gave great pleasure to Printing House Square. Chirol sent his compliments to Lavino: "I have never congratulated you, I think, on your share in the Anglo-French agreement—and it was no inconsiderable one. But I have been, and still feel, so run down that I am apt to put off anything which does not seem absolutely urgent." He added concerning the second agreement that the same correspondent had for many years sponsored: "An Anglo-Russian agreement will, I feel, be much more difficult, and so long as the war continues, impossible—unless Russia is prepared to include in it a fair and honourable peace with Japan. . . ."

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Lavino, April 25, 1904. (F. 4/863.)

It was not then known in P.H.S. that Berlin was at this time working hard to prevent such an agreement by taking steps to conclude an arrangement of her own. During the war *The Times* gave such ardent support to the Japanese alliance that the paper was even accused of bearing a prime responsibility for the war. In Russia *The Times* was hated. No sort of basis for reconciliation could be foreseen.

In Germany, as Saunders reported in *The Times* of April 16, 1904, there resulted widespread uneasiness at the diplomatic situation. The *Börsenkurier* admitted the failure of France and England to consult Germany before making their treaty, to be an uncomfortable sign:

It would doubtless be an exaggeration to speak of the isolation of Germany, or even of a diminution of her prestige among the nations, since the Triple Alliance still exists. But changes in the diplomatic situation are at present becoming noticeable, and they require to be watched with great attention.

The tone of Bülow's speech in the Reichstag was reserved. In its leading article The Times congratulated him upon his refusal to be led by the Pan-Germans into any adventures in Morocco. As for the feeling the Germans might entertain towards a Russo-British rapprochement, significantly reported from Paris as a possibility, the newspaper said it would be distinctly unfriendly. This was no surprise. From Bismarck's point of view a definite understanding between England and France would have been unsatisfactory enough, but the mere suggestion of an Anglo-Russian rapprochement, such as that made in the Figaro of April 16, would have been even more disconcerting to him. Anything in the nature of a genuine settlement of differences would require an altogether changed strategy and diplomacy. However, said The Times, "as long as Russia has interests in Asia which are unreconciled with those of this country, so long must it be impossible for her to be altogether independent of the diplomacy of her neighbour." This was no doubt perfectly realized in Berlin, and despite the apparent coldness of Russia it was some sort of compensation to German statesmen. But the paper proceeded:

As for the suggestion of the Figaro, it can at once be said that, however premature its specific recommendation may seem in the circumstances to be, the fact that it should have found a place in a

<sup>1</sup> Steed's information from Vienna that the Czar and the Kaiser were engaged in conversations was regarded by Chirol as lacking confirmation and not printed. (See infra, p. 400.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For accusations that *The Times* encouraged war, see the *Saturday Review* of November 23, 1903. The *Novoye Vremya* of May 5, 1903, described Morrison's telegrams as "inventions."

#### GERMAN UNEASINESS

leading French journal is a matter of no little interest and significance. (April 16, 1904.)

Germany, in Bülow's words to the Reichstag, asked for time to consider her position regarding the Anglo-French Agreement. That it marked a new stage in international relations in the broadest sense, Colonial as well as European, was understood, but precisely what it amounted to or would amount to in certain circumstances, was not yet appreciated. British public opinion generally was not greatly interested or very well instructed, although it cannot be said that *The Times* dealt with the situation superficially. A completely new outlook upon affairs was opening to view, it was said. "The Anglo-French Agreement is the most remarkable development in European politics just now." (April 16, 1904.) Lavino conveyed, in his message of April 21, an influential French estimate derived from *L'Aurore*, then under the direction of M. Clemenceau:

With the exception of the Chancellor of the Empire and of official circles, where there is every reason to observe silence in the matter, everybody in Germany seems to realize the change that is gradually taking place in the grouping of the European Great Powers.... The writer in the Aurore affirms on the authority of a Russian personage of exalted rank that except in ultra-reactionary quarters the idea is seriously entertained in Russia of taking advantage of the Anglo-French entente to negotiate a series of agreements with England concerning their respective spheres of interest in Asia. (April 22, 1904.)

Clemenceau, again, prophesied that be the German counter efforts what they may, "the feeling in favour of an understanding with England will not cease to prevail in Russia." Finally, the writer foretold that the splendid isolation of England, which at one time called forth so much scorn from Germany, may before long be applicable to Germany herself. *The Times* headed this dispatch from Paris "The Isolation of Germany."

The situation was certainly being watched with concern in Berlin. An effort to restore German prestige was necessary and pride required that it be done quickly. The Kaiser decided to invite the King to Kiel. The invitation was given against the advice of his ministers. Tirpitz objected to it on the ground that the King would bring with him a suite who would not fail to note the extent of German naval preparation. The King arrived on June 25, 1904, and was duly impressed. Bülow took the opportunity to ventilate an old grievance. The King recognized that there were differences between the two peoples, and it was really unfortunate that they did not better understand each other. "It is all the more difficult to fathom, because the individual German who comes to England soon

feels at home there, and can recognize the great qualities of the English; while on the other hand all the English living in Germany have nothing but praise for the energy and efficiency of the Germans, in every branch of science and art, and latterly, in commerce and industry also." At this point Bülow permitted himself "a smiling interruption: 'with the exception of Mr. Saunders'." The revived criticism by Bülow of Saunders was not based solely upon the correspondent's published articles. The Germans had friends in Britain as well as critics and they were aware of the influence privately exercised by Saunders upon Bell. Early in the year, for instance, Sir Ernest Cassel had once more spoken to Bell on the subject of Anglo-German relations. The substance of the conversation was given to Saunders, who then replied:

- . . . Your conversation with Sir Ernest Cassel about the German Emperor. . . .
- ... It was remarkable that the German Foreign Office and its organs endeavoured at first to divest the Emperor's journey [to Osborne] of all political significance, but afterwards tried to emphasize its results on the political situation. I have no doubt that the visit has improved English feeling towards Germany and towards the Emperor personally, though, as far as I can gather, there had not been any marked hostility towards either immediately before the visit. In Germany the effect has, if anything, been quite the opposite.
- ... It has always been obvious to observers that when once the German Government had got a Navy Act which would give their dockyards as much as they can possibly do for the next ten or fifteen years, they would lose no time in tranquillizing English public opinion by every means in their power. While it is, therefore, only right and fitting that the British people should manifest human gratitude for an Imperial act of sympathy which undoubtedly had a strong human element in it, I cannot sympathize with the political attitude described by Sir Ernest Cassel.<sup>2</sup>

Bülow had every reason to be nervous of a correspondent who understood his policy thus completely. The German Navy was even nervous of a preventive attack by the British Navy. In Tirpitz' opinion the danger period was by no means past and the publication of the Anglo-French understanding made the Foreign Office all the more agitated. In Britain, the feeling in informed circles was buoyant, but though expectant of other sources of strength, confidence in Russia was lacking.

It was known that in Russian ruling circles pro-German feeling was in the ascendant. Renewed attempts to float a new loan were

Bülow, Denkwürdigkeiten II, p. 29.
 Saunders to Bell, February 23, 1904.

#### THE KAISER COURTS THE CZAR

determined upon, in the circumstances, at Berlin. At the same time, political speculations in which Germany was involved were taking place. There was corresponding uneasiness in Parisian Russophile circles. At the middle of July, 1904, Witte, the Russian plenipotentiary, passed through Berlin and saw Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, the Berlin financier and the usual agent of the Russian Government. Saunders had prophesied that the conditions of German cooperation in any Russian loan would require the abandonment by the Czar of the existing Dual Alliance and the admission of Germany to the counsels of France and Russia. A Russo-German combination was precisely what Britain could least afford, and which Germany most needed. When, in July, 1904, Holstein offered his resignation on account of personal differences with Richthofen, he said he was happy to be relieved of responsibility in view of the decline in German prestige. The treaty with Russia that was negotiated a week or two later, and which conferred great benefits upon Germany, related only to commercial affairs.

But more serious discussions were in the background. Six months later, Britain's objection to Germany's coaling the Russian Baltic fleet gave Bülow the chance to instruct the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg to offer Count Lamsdorff a political proposal. It was again offered when the incident of the Dogger Bank on October 21, 1904, provided what Bülow and Holstein (whose quarrel with Richthofen had been patched up) considered the "psychological" moment. The Kaiser initiated a correspondence with the Czar, which developed into the project of a treaty between Russia and Germany. Determined to make the most of their opportunity, he pointed out that, as France was under the thumb of Great Britain, a Russo-German accord, such as they proposed, would, incidentally, have the effect of freeing France from Britain; and if necessary, enable Germany and Russia to give her support. Hence the Czar had only to sign the projected treaty for a new group to arise in the place of the entente, dominated by Britain, the ally of Japan with whom the Czar was at war. To provide prestige, Germany took the opportunity to humiliate France over Morocco. 1 The prestige was dearly bought, for another result of German heavy-handedness was to make France feel more dependent upon Britain; in other words, German pressure strengthened the Franco-British alliance. The Kaiser's enthusiasm for a Russian accord which could compel France to change sides became proportionately greater. It was known that Italy was coquetting with France. A Russian under-

<sup>1</sup> For the Morocco incidents, and the role of W. B. Harris, see infra, pp. 409-416.

standing, it was now recognized, was vital to Germany. German discussions with Russia, which are now known to have been initiated as early as 1903, were secret from most contemporaries even in Berlin. Little of their import leaked out despite the division of opinion in Russian governing circles. Lamsdorff was opposed to a German alliance on the ground that in no circumstances would Britain attack Russia. By this time Chirol heard of the progress of the Russo-German talks that Steed had reported six months earlier. They were first referred to in *The Times* in September. There had also occurred an important Far Eastern development.

The reception in September, 1900, at St. Petersburg of the Siberian Buddhist, Dorjieff, who had for many years resided at Lhasa and had acted as tutor to the Dalai Lama, did not pass without notice in London. The emissary's subsequent reappearance in the Russian Capital a year later, at the head of a political mission, had been regarded, in the circumstances of British preoccupation in South Africa, as carrying with it the promise of a direct challenge to Indian security. Curzon resolved to counter it. On January 18, 1903, the Indian Government proposed an expedition to Lhasa, with the object of negotiating a treaty. Before anything could be done, Russia's objection was announced, and it was not until the summer of 1904 that the British political officer, Colonel Francis Younghusband, was given his instructions. The Indian Government which had been afraid of a Tibetan-Russian agreement felt reassured. After a vain effort by the Tibetans to check the British mission's progress, it duly reached Lhasa to find that the Dalai Lama had fled. In September, i.e., the middle of the Russo-German discussions, The Times Peking Correspondent suddenly interrupted with the summary of a treaty concluded on September 7 between Britain and Tibet. The treaty was designed to put an end to a boundary dispute that had for more than a decade vexed the Indian Government and had been utilized by Russia as opening the way to an encroachment directly and indirectly into China. The Anglo-Tibetan negotiations that were concluded in 1904 were begun four years earlier.

On September 14, 1904, *The Times* printed an article as "From a Correspondent" headed "Russia and Germany: A Far-Eastern Understanding." The writer drew attention to the recent commercial agreements between Germany and Russia,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 392 supra, footnote 1; p. 400 infra.

and asserted that at the same time new political engagements, not necessarily related to Far Eastern matters, had been entered into. The writer admitted that "Official démentis may no doubt be issued to controvert this statement." But it was not to be forgotten that Germany had once before concluded a "reinsurance" treaty with Russia, the secret of which had been preserved until Bismarck, after his fall, revealed it for his own private purposes. To-day it was to be noted that "the importance of the new engagements entered into between Berlin and St. Petersburg exceeds that of Bismarck's Reinsurance Treaty, in the same measure as the scope of William II's Welt-Politik transcends that of the scope of the old Bismarckian diplomacy. which was mainly confined to the European balance of power." The "Correspondent" was Chirol. A leading article by Flanagan which accompanied it, emphasized the importance of the statement from the pen of "an exceptionally well-informed Correspondent" and pointed out the truth, obvious after all, that German or Russian interpretations of the monarchical principle had much in common. The classes in Germany, too, looked upon Russia as the bulwark against the pressure of the masses. "Their hearts warm to the Plehves, the Sipinguines, and the Pobiedonostzeffs." While not pretending to know much of the new arrangements between the two autocracies The Times believed that they were given shape at the time Bülow and Witte were engaged in drawing up the commercial treaty. But their outline was indicated by the combination of Russia's present plight and the close relation of the two countries. "Germany, we are assured, will stand by Russia in the settlement of the peace, and Russia, in return, will give Germany a 'free hand'-perhaps something more—in realizing her Far-Eastern ambitions, mainly, no doubt, at the expense of England."

Berlin promptly made Morrison's report and Chirol's commentary the excuse for a general attack upon *The Times*. In November, Bülow described the paper as having conducted a notorious campaign of falsehood concerning Tibet and he told Sir Frank Lascelles that he

could not help thinking that a strong faction in England was working towards a conflict with Germany. Lascelles replied that it was true that *The Times* was adopting a very regrettable attitude towards us, and was endeavouring to disseminate distrust against us in England. Confidentially he added that of the English Ministers, Lord Lansdowne was the least to be influenced by it. Mr. Balfour was impressed occasionally by those insinuations and apt to believe in sinister intentions

on the part of Germany. With some other Ministers, it was still more the case than with Mr. Balfour.

The real life and soul of this campaign was Mr. Chirol. He was-Lascelles said—convinced that we had concluded a secret agreement with Russia directed against England. Mr. Chirol would not give particulars, except that he had received this information from Paris. Lascelles did not admit that Chirol and his friends of The Times and the National Review were working for an Anglo-German conflict. But they feared that certain English politicians, and in particular King Edward when meeting our Emperor, might grant Germany concessions with regard to British interests.1

The "notorious" Tibet campaign of The Times was often resurrected by future German critics of Printing House Square. The matter blew over more easily in Russia, where graver concerns demanded attention.

The Berlin journals were instructed to deny indignantly the paper's allegation that a Russo-German understanding had been concluded, while those of Paris acknowledged that the suggestion was sensational. The Norddeutsche Zeitung did not give the statements of The Times serious attention for another twenty-four hours. On the 17th the journal greatly enjoyed deriding The "The Times has so often called attention to dreadful Times. intrigues on the part of the German Empire, and has so often uttered Cassandra-like cries which invariably produced no effect, that the significance of these latest disclosures regarding a Russo-German agreement may be pretty accurately gauged. Most journals have taken quite the proper view of the hallucinations of The Times." The Norddeutsche Zeitung's article led Chirol, on the 17th, to reply sharply that the articles in The Times did not describe the engagements as an agreement contracted and formally concluded at Norderney. What the articles did say was, that an understanding took definite shape at the time of the commercial negotiations which Witte conducted in July at Norderney with Bülow. Thus, continued the writer, the German semi-official press that contradicted statements which had not appeared in The Times shows that it had lost its temper and its manners. The fact was, that while Witte and Bülow were discussing commercial business, communications on another subject passed between the two Emperors.2 Further denials followed

1904) much used by Bülow.

<sup>1</sup> Bülow's Memo. of November 4, 1904, in Deutschland und die Maechte vor dem Krieg in antlichen Schriften des Fürsten Bülow. (Dresden, 1929) I, 157; Bülow explained to the Kaiser that he had seen Lascelles and that the Ambassador "will telegraph to London that the news is false that Germany and Russia are coming to an understanding." Cf. Bülow to the Kaiser, November 4, 1904. (G.P. XIX, 219.)

2 Denied in the Süddeutsche Reichscorrespondenz (see The Times, September 24, 1904) week weed by Bülow.

#### THE REPORTED RUSSO-GERMAN UNDERSTANDING

and were circulated by the Wolff Bureau. The Berliner Lokal-anzeiger introduced the repudiations as from a quarter which was in close touch with the British Foreign Office.

On September 20th the British Ambassador in Berlin interviewed the Foreign Secretary regarding the report in The Times that an agreement with Russia was being negotiated.<sup>1</sup> Richthofen firmly denied it and said that The Times report would create a disagreeable impression in Germany. Pains were taken elsewhere to restrain comment upon German designs. When Morrison wired from Peking confirmation that a Russo-German understanding was being negotiated. Bülow instructed Mumm von Schwarzenstein to see Morrison.<sup>2</sup> Although the denials made no impression upon Chirol he made every endeavour to secure additional confirmation.<sup>3</sup> On September 23 Count Lamsdorff told Sir Charles Hardinge that the terms of the Anglo-Tibetan Treaty as printed in The Times had made a distinctly unwelcome impression in Russia. On the 27th Sazonov, Chargé in London, upon Lamsdorff's instructions, spoke to Lord Lansdowne in a similar sense. Simultaneously, M. Geoffray informed Delcassé that Younghusband had "practically established a British Protectorate over Tibet." Paul Cambon was informed on the date of writing by Sir Francis Bertie, provisional Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that the account in The Times was more or less accurate.4

In fact, the Russians and the Germans were, for the time being, united, though not for the same reasons, in wishing to resist British action in, or on the frontiers of, China. The conclusion of the *entente* in April had been warning enough for Germany to lean towards Russia and the British alliance with Japan gave the Germans an immense diplomatic advantage. But the advantage was not one that could stand shocks such as the announcement of a German encroachment in the Far East. When, therefore, on October 23 Morrison reported that the

<sup>1</sup> G. and T. IV., No. 4.

<sup>2 &</sup>quot;I leave it to you: to induce Morrison to communicate the actual facts in accordance with your statements, also, perhaps, to give the same information to your British colleague [Satow] for remittance to his Government, and to see about the dissemination of the truth in the Diplomatic Corps there. The Times also exploits Morrison's communication concerning our relationship with Russia by representing Germany as the mischiefmaker in the rapprochement of two great Asiatic land Powers." Bülow to Mumm, October 21, 1904. (G.P. XIX, 653; Cf. G. and T. IV, 4); Lascelles to Lansdowne, September 23, 1904.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Cf. Chirol to Steed, October 21, 1904. (F.4/957.) "Keep your eye on our good friends in Berlin. I have excellent authority for believing that the understanding between William and Nicholas was carried some steps forward during Prince Henry's visit to Russia for the christening. No doubt is now entertained here in responsible quarters as to the existence of an understanding. The only differences are as to how far it goes and whether it has been put into any formal shape. Even Paris admits it is only too probable."

<sup>4</sup> Geoffray, London, to Delcassé, September 21, 1904. (D.D.F. 3ème série V, No. 345.)

German Minister in China had questioned the authenticity of the text and the correspondent made the further statement that if it were proved that England had received exceptional privileges in Tibet Germany would claim similar privileges in Shan-Tung, there were instant denials that Germany had intervened with any claim. On the 21st a leading article in *The Times*, apparently without seeking confirmation from Morrison, but relying upon another source, to-day unknown, laid renewed stress upon the British view. The matter was one upon which Chirol entertained a very decided opinion. He declined to admit that Germany had any right to compensation, and *The Times* vigorously rejected the "claim."

In a letter to Bernstorff, now acting in place of Eckardstein, as Press Officer, Chirol frankly expressed his conviction:

I should be glad . . . to have a quiet talk about Anglo-German relations upon which I hope we may agree to differ amicably. . . Though I quite understand the advantages from the German point of view of utilizing the war for a rapprochement with Russia—and therefore cannot see why Berlin should be so keen to deny it—it seems to me to be carrying it to dangerous lengths to try and interfere in regard to Tibet where it cannot be pretended that Germany has any local standing; however, I suppose the Wilhelmstrasse knows best!

Bernstorff's denial that the German Minister in Peking had taken the step alleged by Morrison was countered by Chirol with the statement that "I cannot agree that our Peking Correspondent has sent us a canard; it is not his habit." Moreover, he added, Morrison was not the only authority from which information reached P.H.S. On the general subject of Anglo-German relations, Chirol said that:

I do not in the least resent the policy of hostility towards this country which the German Government has pursued now for nearly ten years. Every nation is the best judge of its own interests, and from the German point of view I should very probably have approved the anti-Austrian policy of Bismarck before 1866, and his anti-French policy before 1870. But I cannot make myself a party to the endeavours of Berlin—intelligible as they may be from the Berlin point of view—to disguise the dominant tendency of Germany's present policy.<sup>2</sup>

Whatever might publicly be said, in the opinion of not a few highly placed Germans, an understanding with Russia was now of cardinal importance. The Russo-Japanese war and its character presented an opportunity of which the Kaiser must not fail

<sup>2</sup> Chirol to Bernstorff, October 21, 1904. (Op. cit., p. 67.)

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Bernstorff, October 17, 1904. (Bernstorff, Memoirs, London, 1936, p. 66.)

#### CHIROL AND BERNSTORFF

to take advantage. It is now known that on October 31, 1904, at a meeting in Bülow's house, with Schlieffen, Tirpitz, and Richthofen present. Holstein suggested that an alliance should be offered to Russia, with the ultimate object of their both prevailing upon France to join the coalition. Tirpitz' minority view was against a political treaty. Germany should await events. "On the whole, our most important political object is to gain time and to build our fleet." Simultaneously, Bülow gave an interview to Mr. H. H. Bashford, the journalist connected with the Daily Telegraph. It appeared in the Nineteenth Century for December. Bashford set forth the thesis, which he said was held in many circles in England, i.e., that German policy aimed at the destruction of the British Empire. Bülow's repudiations followed. He described a war between the two Powers as a "monstrous crime" and "a dire calamity." Outright mention of the possibility of war was startling. The word "war," itself, had been studiously avoided so far, but events and prospects were forcing forward the consideration of strategic factors in many interested quarters.

The German Naval Bills were the main events that made necessary a full revision of Britain's sea-power and the prospects of a "Continental war," by which was meant a struggle in the Middle East, completed the process which compelled Bell and Buckle during the second half of 1904 to consider remedying inadequacies in the military knowledge at the disposal of the office. It was decided to search for a new and well-equipped military correspondent.

In the meantime, Lavino's message to *The Times*, printed on November 22, 1904, reported, as the view of "one of the most observant diplomatists in Europe," that

The German Emperor is determined to prevent an understanding between England, Russia and France. He is also anxious to acquire a decisive voice in Russian foreign affairs. He believes that the moment has come for him to wreck the Dual Alliance, and to preclude the possibility of an Anglo-Franco-Russian understanding by driving a wedge between France and Russia. That is the object of the meeting reported to be impending between him and the Tsar, and that is why the German Foreign Office is exhausting the resources of its journalistic organization in order to bring the meeting about.

Commenting on the asseverations of Bülow regarding "war" that were made public when Bashford's interview in the Nineteenth Century appeared The Times said that:

<sup>1</sup> Tirpitz, Memoirs, 169.

It will need something more than his honied assurances, whether delivered to interviewers or in the Reichstag, to remove or even to weaken the impression made in this country by the acts as well as by the words of German statesmen and publicists throughout a long series of years. (December 7, 1904.)

The office, and not Chirol only, had excellent reasons for concluding that the Germans were following a tortuous policy which by no means represented the interests of Austria-Hungary and Italy, their partners in the Triple Alliance, and was designed to disrupt the Franco-Russian Alliance and the Anglo-French entente. For two years the news from Vienna had been throwing light upon the policy of Berlin. Lavino, it has been recorded, had been promoted to Paris in 1902 and his place filled by the former Rome Correspondent who had earlier served in the Berlin office during the interval between Chirol and Saunders.<sup>1</sup>

Steed arrived in Vienna on November 25, 1902, and was at once introduced by Lavino to Goluchowski, Kállay, Széchényi and the chief diplomats and journalists. Steed threw himself into his new work with all energy. He was well equipped naturally, and prepared by experience to undertake the task of succeeding a correspondent of Lavino's outstanding abilities. Coming direct from nearly six years in Rome, he brought to the understanding of Central European politics a peculiarly complete knowledge of the currents flowing between Italy and Austria, and between Italy and France. He was also intimately acquainted with the cross-currents which derived from the changing mutual relations of Italy and Germany. By the end of his first year the correspondent, writing from Budapest, reported to Bell that, in order to deal with the Magyars at first hand, he was learning Hungarian, and "I hope to break the neck of the language in six months." At the same time he was busy studying the economics of the Habsburg countries and thus "gradually groping my way towards that accuracy that gives authority to the paper."

He soon laid the foundation of a friendship with Kállay, the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Finance, as firm as that he had enjoyed with Visconti Venosta. Count Nigra, the Italian Ambassador, appreciated Steed's enthusiasm for Visconti Venosta's plan to neutralize German dominance in the Triple Alliance, by bringing about a close understanding between Austria-Hungary and Italy and at the same time cultivating British good will. There was a complication in the conduct of the

<sup>1</sup> For the circumstances of Lavino's transfer to Paris, see p. 375, supra; for Steed's transfer to Vienna, see p. 293, supra.

#### STEED SUCCEEDS LAVINO IN VIENNA

many Italians who continued to agitate the Southern Tirol question while attacking the Austrian Southern Slavs. They did not see that, by demanding Fiume and Trieste, they were playing into the hands of the Germans. To Steed the Southern Slavs were a people of great interest. In Rome he had early become acquainted with the depth of resentment which separated them from the Italians, and he branched out to the study of the numerous racial and religious antagonisms which entered so deeply into the heart of Austro-Hungarian affairs. These stresses within the Dual Monarchy became particularly relevant after the breakdown of Chamberlain's talks with the Germans in 1901. Closely connected was the question of the degree of Francis Joseph's dependence upon William and the situation likely to arise when the aged Emperor died.

Within a few weeks of Steed's settling down the series of visits -in connexion with Turkish reforms in the Balkans-made during November brought Lamsdorff, the Russian Foreign Minister, to Vienna to consult with Goluchowski. The two Ministers agreed to instruct their respective Ambassadors at Constantinople to draft a programme of reforms. It was too strongly supported for the Sultan to reject it. But Russia and Austria, as the two most interested Powers, remained so jealous of their spheres of influence in Macedonia that neither was willing to recognize the interest of such a Power as Italy. Six months later, in June, 1903, the accord of Austria and Russia on the Macedonian question was tested, but not shaken, by the assassination of the King and Queen of Serbia. Eight weeks later King Edward VII paid a "non-political" visit to Vienna. Steed was formally presented. It was the first of numerous meetings. There followed next month at Mürzsteg another conference on the Macedonian question between the Austro-Hungarian and the Russian Foreign Ministers. The Mürzsteg programme, of which a great deal was to be heard, was designed to pacify the Balkans.

Not the least anxious of the many racial antagonisms that embittered Balkan politics was that which embroiled the Austrian Slavs with the Italians. Steed's knowledge of the controversy was based mainly upon what he had learnt in Rome. So far, at Vienna, he had not found it necessary to come to close quarters with the question. But in April, 1904, he received a visit from an Austrian Croat, Dr. Trumbitch, Mayor of Split (or Spalato), in Dalmatia, and a Member of Parliament. Dr. Trumbitch complained that the editor of the Croat newspaper Novi List of Fiume had been prosecuted by the Magyar authorities on account of a series of articles commenting on the Croatian

situation and urging the necessity for an agreement between the Slav and the Italian inhabitants of the Eastern Adriatic. Trumbitch thought that *The Times* would be interested to have first-hand evidence that the Magyars were punishing a Croat for trying to forward peace between the Slavs and the Italians. When Steed looked at the articles he found the Croat newspaper arguing that, in default of agreement, the Germans and not the Italians, or the Slavs, would hold the Adriatic. The reason for the Hungarian action thus became apparent. In the light of Visconti Venosta's advice to Steed, the incident appeared as anything but a chance occurrence. Steed took no public action. He made his plans to attend the trial of the Croat editor, Francis Supilo, and wrote to a high Hungarian official announcing his intention. No proceedings against Supilo were taken.

In the same April, Goluchowski invited Tittoni, the Italian Foreign Minister, to meet him at Abbazia, where he testified to his pleasure at being able to confirm officially the understanding that the maintenance of intimate and confidential relations was the policy of both Rome and Vienna. Six months later Steed had a talk with the Austro-Hungarian Minister on the same subject. There was no likelihood, Steed wrote, of an Austrian occupation of Macedonia, despite the wishes of certain Viennese circles. "There is not a decent field gun in the country and won't be for three years to come"; but the desire to make a move of some sort in the Balkans was widespread. "I wish Italy would put her army and navy into order" added Steed. "It is the only way to checkmate Germany, who is behind Austro-Hungarian Macedonian policy." That a move into the Balkans in the spring, summer or autumn of 1904 would be premature was recognized by the initiates. Between March and September hints of Russo-German talks, begun, it was suspected, by the Kaiser, found their way to Chirol and Steed. In the early part of March, 1904, Kramarzh, the Young-Czech leader, secured through a friend in the Russian Foreign Office a document that purported to be an account of Lamsdorff's résumé of a communication addressed by the Kaiser to the Czar. Later, Kramarzh lent the document to Steed who thought it his duty to show it to the British Ambassador. It was at once wired in cipher to Lansdowne. As Kramarzh was about to send to Le Temps a message through the paper's Prague Correspondent reporting the substance of the Lamsdorff résumé, Steed immediately wired to Lavino in Paris advising him to look out for it, and perhaps include an extract

<sup>1</sup> See Steed's interview with Visconti Venosta, supra, p. 289.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Steed to Chirol, September 16, 1904.

#### THE KRAMARZH MEMORANDUM

in his message to The Times. He also wired direct to Printing House Square. But Kramarzh's message to Le Temps included a prophecy of the death of the Emperor, and the paper's Prague Correspondent thought it prudent to send the message by post to Le Temps. Thus the first reference to the Kaiser-Czar correspondence was made in the Young-Czech organ Národni Listy, published at Prague. Meanwhile Kramarzh had shown the document to Goluchowski. The Minister characterized it as a Russian "indiscretion" calculated to correct the "excessive amiability of Germany." Goluchowski's view was duly reported by Steed to Chirol who, so far, had not seen the text of the document and he sent a copy of it to Printing House Square.1 Chirol replied with a request that Steed should embody its substance in a dispatch, and on September 23, 1904, The Times printed a telegram from Vienna. It was worded so discreetly as to bring down upon Steed a rebuke for "obscurity" phrased by Bell in the plainest of plain English.

The correspondent had little difficulty in justifying his "obscurity." It was unavoidable. The factors that had made the Entente Cordiale in April were, with its successful conclusion. affecting in turn the relations of the Powers; but the extent or direction of the changes he did not then know. The position of Russia, still at war with the Japanese, must remain fixed and enigmatic until the end of the war. For generations it had been the policy of Vienna to recognize that British antagonism to Russia strengthened the position of the Dual Monarchy as Russia's rival in the Near East. In the event of an Anglo-Russian conflict over the Dardanelles, it was taken for granted that the services of the Monarchy would be of value to Britain. The customary view had not weakened by October, 1904, when Steed reported to Chirol that "Golu is not pleased with Russia. She has been backing Italy on the sly in the De Giorgis row and as she can't run a Balkan policy of her own yet awhile she is using Italy and the Balkan States to put spokes in the wheel of Austria-Hungary."2 The anxieties of Austria regarding Russia were increased by the currency of rumours regarding the probability of a Russo-German understanding. Political circles in Vienna were much agitated during the middle of November, 1904. On the 12th Steed was excited by a message from the Neues Wiener Tagblatt, with whom he had an arrangement by which he was supplied with all late news to appear in the paper in due course, and from whom he often secured confidential information that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Steed to Chirol, September 16, 1904. The copy of Kramarzh's memorandum was returned to the writer by Steed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Steed to Chirol, October 6, 1904.

could not be published. The message was a plain hint that something substantial was behind the story of the Kaiser-Czar correspondence. Steed dealt with it in a telegram to *The Times* which arrived on Sunday, the 13th, when Chirol had reasons for recommending the Editor to refrain from printing it at once.1

In the meantime Steed inquired from his friends at the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* the source of the paper's information. Steed was informed that it had been given to the paper's Berlin representative by Bülow himself, on condition that it should not be dated from Berlin. On Sunday the 13th, Steed had nearly two hours with Goluchowski's deputy and right-hand man, Kajetan Mérey. During the conversation Count Szögyényi-Marich, Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in Berlin, arrived to ask for news regarding the Kaiser-Czar story. Mérey rose excitedly from his chair when Steed said it came direct from Bülow: "Toujours la même histoire," he said,

Bülow travaille énormément avec et par la presse, beaucoup trop selon moi! Toutes les fois qu'il désire que nous fassions quelque chose, il fait parler nos journaux—et puis il accueille avec condescendance les idées qu'il nous a attribuées! Pourtant cette fois-ci c'est vraiment un starkes Stück.<sup>2</sup>

At the end of the year *The Times* decided upon an important step. It was resolved to search for a new Military Correspondent. The action signified a businesslike facing of the facts of power as they existed in the world. Foreign events became more impressive still.

On New Year's Day, 1905, the Japanese captured Port Arthur. Disturbances broke out in Russia almost immediately. The great strikes of early January, 1905, at the armament works of Baird and Putiloff were promptly reported in *The Times* by Robert Wilton, the *Glasgow Herald* Correspondent acting as *locum tenens*, supplemented by Reuter. On the 23rd *The Times* gave its first account of a revolutionary outbreak in St. Petersburg. The report, headed with four decks of sub-titles and given large crossheads, described the scene when the Cossacks blocked all access to the common meeting-place in the Palace Square, and first knouted and then fired upon the strikers and their sympathizers, causing great loss of life. The horror of Britain, expressed in a leading article on the 24th, did not spare the Czar or fail to note the international repercussions. In Paris the sensation was understood to be profound and was viewed with sympathy, while the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 392, supra.

<sup>2</sup> Steed to Chirol, November 16, 1904.

#### RUSSIAN DEFEAT - MASSACRE OF THE STRIKERS

approval of Berlin was understood as a sign of autocratic solidarity. The triumph of reaction in such an extreme form was recognized to be complete though held to be temporary. *The Times* had faith in the people and was resolute against the autocracy.

A leading article on the 26th, written in a cooler temper. emphasized the duty and responsibility of wise statesmanship to deprive revolutionaries of their moral, even more than their material, arms. Any fool can govern by force; the question of the hour was whether the Czar would have the courage to enter upon a policy of governing by moderate reform. The placarding of streets in the Russian Capital, and other cities, with statements that the revolutionaries had been supplied with funds from Britain, caused The Times to renew its protests against the Government, henceforth described in headlines and elsewhere as "The Reactionaries." Meanwhile, the unfavourable progress of the Japanese war led to Kuropatkin's resignation and at the same time negotiations on foot in Paris for a new loan were encountering difficulties. At the end of February the great battle of Mukden began. Its end after a fortnight's fighting left Russia so completely defeated that she had no alternative but to evacuate the larger part of Manchuria.

The shock to the Western Powers was not limited to Imperial Germany. The French were full of concern almost as much for their ally as for themselves. The situation was urgent. On April 30, twelve months after the signature of the Anglo-French entente, a Military Convention between France and Russia was announced. In Britain warning was given to Germany that her ambitions on the sea were being closely watched, for in February, 1905, Mr. Arthur Lee, Civil Lord of the Admiralty, made a demand at a public meeting that Germany should cease competitive building with Britain. In Germany the speech was considered an insult, and protests were made. Even at home some regarded the statement as eccentric and there was a general tendency to interpret it as a passing exaggeration. The German Ambassador stated that when he dined with King Edward and sat next to the Prince of Wales, the Prince talked to him about the speech, which he described as a piece of clumsiness without evil intention. He relegated the idea of warlike intentions on the part of England against Germany to the realm of legend, and expressed himself quite vehemently against newspapers in general. The Prince was against The Times in particular. He agreed that the agitation carried on by this paper, so Metternich reported

to Bülow, was disgraceful; but, the Prince hastened to add, the British Government was powerless.1

The underlying German hope that Britain, in view of the Russian débâcle and French dependence upon a thus weakened ally, should renew the quest for an alliance with the strongest military Power in the West made no headway. In P.H.S. it was realized that a rapprochement between Germany and Russia would again be attempted. In some respects it would be a natural grouping. There was a close similarity of dynastic position and of problems of industrial development. Chirol consistently maintained his old view that Russia's ambitions blocked anything like a serious understanding, that the Anglo-French entente marked the limit of desirable British commitments and that it implied no antagonism to Germany or to the Triple Alliance.

It was in these circumstances that *The Times* printed in March. 1905, a series of signed articles (by Lucien Wolf) on the subject of Russian insolvency that aroused controversy. The articles were supported by a leader on March 4, which asserted that the writer had made out a formidable case against a country which, as the Russian Finance Minister, M. Kokovtzeff, acknowledged, had a debt that amounted to 750 millions sterling. Little was to be expected from a "bureaucracy that had no instinct but that of repression by further exaction, and of plunging further into debt." Ten days later the paper announced that the negotiations in Paris for the new loan had been suspended. Immediately M. Kokovtzeff, telegraphed for publication a letter addressed to The Times, in which he invited the Editor to visit St. Petersburg and look into vaults and see for himself the falsity of Wolf's statement that the "vaunted millions" of the Russian gold reserve "no longer existed." To the text of M. Kokovtzeff's letter the Editor added a note expressing regret that a financial investigation by himself of the kind proposed "hardly fell within the province of a newspaper." The Editor also referred readers to the context of the quoted paragraph which did nowhere say that no reserves existed, but laid stress upon the real point of interest: whether the reserve was of such dimensions that Russia could draw upon it without thereby impairing the credit of the State. A leading article of March 23 repeated that even with the presence of bullion experts, The Times would feel unable to take in hand an investigation "so entirely outside the ordinary limits of our business" and proceeded to point out that the Minister's resort to the telegraph was evidence of concern for the national

<sup>1</sup> Metternich to Bülow, Memoirs II, 151.

#### ATTACKS ON RUSSIAN SOLVENCY

credit. The leader tailed off with a pious aspiration from "The Crisis," a thin poem which Meredith had sent in as a topical contribution, and which appeared elsewhere in the same issue. The tone of these articles, disagreeable enough to the Russians, was an embarrassment to the French. The Times, which had given so much welcome support to the Anglo-French entente, was no longer considered of importance or value. M. Paul Cambon assured Delcassé on March 23 that The Times had now lost its position as the great authority on City affairs owing to a policy which had become personal. To-day, the paper was far less influential in England than foreigners thought. The campaign against Russian credit did not originate in the City, it was inspired by the proprietors and the editors, in particular by Moberly Bell. But it was possible that the paper had been influenced by Stock Exchange speculators. The Ambassador added that while he hoped attacks on Russia would cease, he would recommend the avoidance of further public controversy between the Russian Government and The Times as it would only advantage the iournal.1 The nervousness of the French, as appears from these statements, was justifiable. Circumstances were making it very undesirable to push further the quarrel between the Russian Government and The Times and their urgency was destined to increase. The Ambassador wrote on the 23rd.<sup>2</sup> Three days earlier the Norddeutsche Zeitung had announced the Kaiser's approaching visit to Tangier.

Morocco, as one of the last of the independent African countries remaining unorganized, was ripe for protection and exploitation. But the rivalry of the Powers, combined with the adroitness of the Sultan, made for chronic disagreement over the course of action to be taken, and general embarrassment in taking it. Delay seemed the better course. It was not until the advent of Abd-el-Aziz that intervention became practical politics. Since 1899 it had been accepted doctrine that Morocco was in decay. There was a rebellion in 1900. At the same time the treasury was empty, authority did not exist and the Sultan became willingly dependent upon Europeans for advice and finance. French agents were the most active, but the Sultan was accustomed to rely for counsel upon Sir Henry Maclean, formerly a British soldier, who had been in the Moroccan Service since 1880, and Walter B. Harris, correspondent of

<sup>1</sup> Cambon to Delcassé, March 23, 1905. (D.D.F., 2ème série VI, 179.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The value of the Embassy's knowledge of P.H.S. may be judged from Cambon's statement that *The Times* had only the support of the Harmsworth papers, "thus revealing the intimate relations Harmsworth had established with the journal." This was three years before Harmsworth became connected with *The Times*. The rumours regarding Harmsworth and *The Times* were in circulation during 1902-1905. See the following Chapter, pp. 439-440.

The Times since 1887. Harris, holding the traditional view that France was England's antagonist in Morocco, viewed her as the most serious menace to Moroccan independence. By 1905 he had tabulated a long list of French aggressions. Neither he nor his compatriots in Morocco reacted with the same ready acquiescence as Englishmen elsewhere to the Entente Cordiale. A deal which bartered Morocco for Egypt could not interest Englishmen in business in Tangier. From the Tangier vantage-point, therefore, German intervention looked like the salvation of British interests in Morocco. The Kaiser's visit, reported in the spring, was welcomed by the whole of the British Colony. When it took place it caused, according to Harris, "the liveliest satisfaction to the native population."

Walter Burton Harris was the son of Frederick Harris, a shipowner of London. Harris was educated at Harrow and his father's business encouraged the young man to travel. At the age of eighteen he had already been round the world. He was an apt linguist. At the age of twenty-one he accompanied Sir William Kirby Green on his mission to Marrakesh. Harris turned out to be a good impersonator, and his ability to talk, walk, and gesticulate in Moorish fashion gave him a rare power to mix with the natives and gain a deep insight into the national methods of thought. Possessed of private means and being of a keen, active, and emotional temperament he was free to talk and write as he lived and liked.

Harris began his career as correspondent for *The Times* from the date of his first visit to the country. By 1905 he was possessed of eighteen years' wide experience of the country, a deep knowledge of the social conditions of the people, and unique acquaintance with the political intentions of its rulers. He was accepted as an authority by The Times, by the national representatives in Morocco and by the agents of some European Powers, including Germany. Harris's advice had often been sought, and his services employed, by the British diplomatic representatives, but the British, unlike the German officials, had seen no necessity to give public recognition to a correspondent whose vanities were not difficult to perceive. He did not become intimate with the young Sultan Abd-el-Aziz until 1901. The intimacy grew. Harris did not share the Sultan's view concerning domestic policy, but, like the Sovereign himself, and so many other Englishmen in the Near East, was emotionally inclined to champion Arab independence. The lawlessness of the country did not deter him although he was kidnapped and nearly murdered more than



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once. Rescued with difficulty, Harris continued the campaign against intervention. With the resident British he threw his influence against the neighbouring Power, France, from which came the chief threat. In 1902 he intervened in the Sovereign's behalf in the Anglo-French discussions concerning Morocco. The French scheme, premature at the least, was to settle outstanding questions with Britain on the basis of compensation to be provided by Morocco. Harris and Maclean, like most British residents, were particularly antagonized by this suggestion. Harris, moreover, had been so long in Morocco that he was incapable of viewing Morocco in terms of broad politics.

Thus it was that Harris lagged behind the office and defended Morocco against France. Harris's views were in a sense his own; more accurately they were those of the older British and some other elements in Morocco who believed that, properly safeguarded in her integrity and independence, the Sultan could proceed to the pacification of his country. Menaced as the Sultan was by French pressure, it was, in the view of detached British residents, proper for him and his advisers to encourage a certain measure of German interest. This it was hoped would warn France not to expect a walkover if, upon the pretext of isolated incidents on the Moroccan-Algerian frontier, she should intervene. In January, 1905 a telegram from Harris announced in The Times that in the event of the Sultan's native advisers finding it advisable to seek outside assistance in reorganizing the country, they would unanimously do so, and that their appeal would be to Germany. The statement was copied in the German Press, to the extreme annovance of M. Bihourd, Ambassador in Berlin, who reported the fact to Delcassé. 1 On March 19, 1905, Kühlmann reported to Bülow that Harris had revealed to him the contents of a long letter giving what the German agent described as "the well-known Mr. Chirol's views" on Morocco. According to Kühlmann, Harris said that Chirol's letter was "to the effect that France made a bad mistake in thinking that the international side of the question was finally settled by the British and Spanish Agreements. It was France's business to agree with the other Powers, especially Germany, just as England had done with the Powers over the Egyptian question. Germany's interests were so important that account must in all cases be taken of her commercial guarantees, and eventual cession of the Sus district between the High Atlas and the Wad Nun would have

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bihourd to Delcassé, February 2, 1905. D.D.F., 2ème série VI, No. 68; Cf. G.P. XX, p. 248, in which Harris is represented as trying to influence Morocco to accept German help; Cf. G.P. XX, p. 261, on The Times Morocco Correspondence.

won German consent to a preferential position of the French Republic. England was not called upon to pull France's Moroccan chestnuts out of the fire. Diplomatic support under the entente meant diplomatic support in Morocco only. England ought not, by any action outside these limits, to disturb relations with other Powers, especially Germany, in whom there were remarkable signs of a more friendly feeling." That this was an accurate version of Chirol's views—the text has not been recovered—is not to be taken for granted; but if it in any degree represented his views in early March, it offers a striking contrast to the line which The Times in fact adopted. It has to be admitted, too, that in communicating with Kühlmann, Harris saddled himself with an extremely serious responsibility. His use of Chirol's letter cannot but have encouraged the Germans. Harris's motive, as later diplomatic exchanges prove, was as naive as it was irregular.

When it was known that the Kaiser projected a visit to Tangier, the news was taken well in Tangier, as Harris's telegram in *The Times* on March 23 explains:

In diplomatic circles the belief is gaining ground that Germany will accept no compensation as the price of her acquiescence in French aims, but will insist that the absolute integrity of Morocco shall be maintained.

The delight of the Moorish population at the Kaiser's visit grows hourly, and the long pent-up anti-French feeling now finds expression.

In P.H.S. it was believed that the All Highest was not in a serious mood concerning Morocco, and that, although he might exploit, explore, and even embroil the situation, Germany had no intention of armed intervention there. As to the visit itself, Harris was instructed by Bell on March 30 to send not more than 300 words of description in addition to any important speech. The visit, said Bell, was one "we can hardly ignore altogether," but it was a visit which "is only offensive to good taste and that is a quality one must not expect in him. He has, after all, a perfect right to go to Tangier." Moreover, added Bell, if it were German policy to strengthen the entente between England and France, the Kaiser was going precisely the right way about it. When on March 31 the Kaiser landed, Harris reported no speeches, although he secured the text of the exchanges between the Kaiser's and the Sultan's representatives. The correspondent said,

<sup>1</sup> G.P. XX, 261; Dugdale III, 223.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bell to Harris, March 30, 1904. (39/499.)

#### THE KAISER VISITS TANGIER

however, that although "the Kaiser spent only two hours at Tangier, the visit may have marked an epoch in the history of Morocco." The hypothetical words seemed to cover a prospective German move.

Harris was in the closest touch with Kühlmann at this time On March 27, four days before the Kaiser's visit, Bülow instructed the German agent to ascertain from Harris whether, in his opinion, England would be likely to agree to a Conference to be summoned by the Sultan. On April 3, Kühlmann reported: "Harris is personally sympathetic to the idea and wishes to begin a campaign in favour of it at once, but he is not quite sure if The Times is prepared just now to proceed with it. He promised to show a new and interesting letter from Chirol." If Harris. who had just then received a telegram from the office which made him more than a little doubtful about the readiness of The Times to support the idea of a Conference, showed Kühlmann Chirol's letter it would have been an extraordinary proceeding. There is no evidence that Harris went so far. In due course the idea was abruptly rejected by The Times and if only Harris had from the first discouraged Bülow and Kühlmann, much misunderstanding might have been avoided. But the office, it must be conceded to Harris, had hardly given the correspondent clear instructions in time. Not until March 27 did Chirol write, explicitly, the letter which Harris received only a week later. Moreover Harris, as usual, was busy, and it could hardly have been foreseen by anybody that his assassination would have been attempted at Tangier during the week. The act was probably intended as a demonstration against Harris's German connexions. When the Kaiser, already at Lisbon on the way to Tangier, heard of it he viewed the attempt as one more reason for not proceeding with the plan.<sup>2</sup> Chirol's letter, when it did arrive in Tangier and get Harris's attention, could not be said to be lacking either in firmness or definition. It was not at all the sort of letter that he would care to show to Kühlmann.

I telegraphed to you last week asking you to bear in mind that the policy of *The Times* is to support the French in Morocco. I was rather alarmed at the tone of some of your messages and at the construction, not altogether unnaturally, placed upon them in Paris. The French may not have acted in every way wisely, and they will

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> G.P. XX, 296; Dugdale III, 224. Among other things, he was enabled to send a "correct version" of the exchange of speeches between the Kaiser and the Sultan's representatives, these being "furnished to a journalist by the German Chargé d'Affaires." (G. and T. III, 63.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> To Bülow, March 28, 1905. (G.P. XX, 279.)

probably commit many blunders before they have done, but that is their business, not ours. What we have to recollect is that our attitude towards them in Morocco will be the touchstone, as far as they are concerned, of the Anglo-French rapprochement, and we cannot afford to allow the slightest suspicion to be cast upon our loyalty to the Agreement. The French in Egypt have accepted their diminutio capitis with such complete loyalty and good grace that our people in Morocco ought to show themselves equal to a similar sacrifice of their old prejudices and prepossessions. Least of all should we do anything which might help forward the dubious aims of German policy. The object of the German Emperor's visit to Tangier is so transparent that, even if we had legitimate grievances against French policy, this should certainly not be the moment to give utterance to them. The last thing we want to do is to travailler pour le Roi de Prusse.1

But unfortunately Harris's "diplomatic" activity had already produced repercussions. M. de Chérisey, French Chargé d'Affaires at Tangier, scornfully describes him as "le fantaisiste correspondent du Times, simple amateur de nouvelles sensationelles."2 The original texts of his telegrams (no longer available)3 were perhaps, as the French Chargé d'Affaires asserted, modified, or even curtailed by Chirol before publication. The foreign pages of The Times, for the whole period from the Kaiser's visit up to the fall of Delcassé, encourage the guess that many dispatches were probably suppressed altogether. There are many gaps in the news from Tangier. What was published, however, was sufficiently anti-French to offer a marked contrast to the rest of the paper. That fact, however, acknowledged its fixed convention. The office either trusted a correspondent or it did not. If it trusted him it printed him. The printing in The Times of Harris's telegram to the effect that the Kaiser's visit may have marked an epoch in the history of Morocco, is proof of the paper's general policy of appointing a correspondent in whom it reposed faith, or removing him. This was the natural policy of P.H.S. The French objection to him was equally natural and of long standing. Harris, presumably in touch with the German Vice-Consul at Fez, who also reported it to his superiors, now represented to The Times that the French agent had publicly claimed to be acting upon a European mandate. This report, when it was believed in Europe, greatly embarrassed the French agent, Taillandier, for he was, in fact, striving to

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Harris, March 27, 1905. (F. 5/56.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Chérisey to Delcassé, March 27, 1905. (D.D.F. 2ème série VI, 189.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Cf. D.D.F. 2ème série VI, No. 264, Geoffray, Chargé d'Affaires in London, to Delcassé, March 9, 1905, that *The Times* has modified certain telegrams from its Tangier (and Berlin) Correspondents, that the Entente Cordiale is genuinely welcomed by the British, &c.

# "THE IMPERIAL AGENT-PROVOCATEUR"

impress the Sultan with his European status without going quite so far as to claim that he was acting for all the Powers.¹ Secondly, Harris declared that the German Legation, as doubtless he learnt from Kühlmann in the previous November, had officially drawn French attention to the failure to consult Germany on Morocco, and to the need to arrange things with Germany. This correct report took some explaining away.²

But when the Kaiser, despite his original unwillingness to undertake the visit, received such a cordial welcome by the population of Tangier, thus beginning, as Harris was inclined to conjecture, a "new epoch," he made a speech. It obviously went beyond giving support to an "open door" policy in Morocco. There was some dispute regarding an alleged discrepancy between the text of the official report of the Kaiser's speech and the words he actually used, but Harris's telegram made it clear that the Kaiser was determined to allow no other Power to come between him and another free sovereign of a free country. It was a challenging statement. Whatever it may have sounded like to Harris, it seemed to *The Times* a "provocation so exaggerated that it palpably overshoots the mark," and the leading article of April 4 denounced William as "the Imperial agent-provocateur."

The office thus made good its intention to give wholehearted support to the *entente*, which it understood in the terms of the agreement of the previous year. Britain had no option but to honour her word with support to France in Morocco even if some of her methods were unwise. As the understanding was the work principally of Delcassé, *The Times* did everything in its power to assist him; and the British Government, even the King himself, sought means to maintain him in power. For personal reasons the Minister was unpopular with his colleagues, but the Cabinet crisis in June, at which he was isolated, really turned on the great national question whether or not his foreign policy involved war with France's extremely powerful neighbour.

The question in the minds of Frenchmen was what Britain would do if Germany invaded, not Morocco, but France or Belgium. The fact was, as Lavino reported as early as April 3, 1905: "The Anglo-French entente is no alliance." He added that "the present attitude of Germany might contribute in given circumstances to effect the transformation." That was as far as Lavino, or Saunders, or Chirol could go. The wishes of the

<sup>1</sup> D.D.F. 2ème série VI, 348; Anderson, p. 186.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> G. and T. III, 67; G.P. XX, 33.

French were clear, but the moral indignation of Britain at the continuing assassinations, massacres of Jews, and intrigues of agrarians interposed an insuperable obstacle to an Anglo-Russian rapprochement of even the most limited character. British reprobation of the disorders did not pass without notice in Russia. The Anglophobe journal, Novoye Vremya, counterattacked Britain's motives for these demonstrations and laid upon her the blame for incidents in the Middle East.

The battle of Tsushima on May 27-28, 1905, brought about the beginning of serious peace talks between Japan and Russia. Chirol, who from the onset of the war had prophesied, as against Wallace's convictions, the victory of the Japanese, now warned Wilton that, in his opinion, "Japan would not agree to pourparlers on the basis of Lamsdorff's 'no indemnity and no territorial cession'." He admitted that "From our own point of view I would rather see her accept an indemnity" and revealed the intention of British official opinion (which was later realized) to secure the renewal, and even the extension, of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. "If," wrote Chirol, "Japan drove the Russians altogether away from the Pacific, the chief quid pro quo we could offer her for the extension of the Japanese alliance to the Middle East, which I strongly favour, would disappear as her position vis-à-vis Russia in the Far East would then be absolutely impregnable for a generation at least."1

Chirol's general view, adjusting itself in accordance with the changing balance of power in the East, had become less anti-Russian. That the Anglo-Japanese Agreement of 1902 had been effective in checking Russian ambitions in the East left little room for doubt. Concerning the future of Anglo-Russian relations, Chirol's view began to approximate rapidly to that Wallace had taken, since 1890, which Wilton also, with a difference, shared. He was not necessarily as opposed to the same country in defeat. A month before Tsushima Chirol told Wilton that he

was most interested in what the Editor of the *Novosti* said to you about our relations with Japan and with Russia respectively. My own belief is that if we once convinced the Russians that England and Japan stood combined against any further attempt to disturb the status quo in Asia, the Russians, after a temporary outbreak of fury, would realize that they had better come to terms with us, and the result would be the very understanding you desire, and all sensible Englishmen must desire, who see that Germany would be the chief gainer by a break between England and Russia. In Europe there are

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Wilton, April 3, 1905. (F. 5/60.)

#### THE CZAR AND THE KAISER AT BJÖRKÖ

many important questions on which we could easily agree and be helped to agreement by our mutual friends in Paris. That we are not inveterately hostile to Russia we have shown, I think, by recognizing not infrequently the value of the Dual Alliance as an evidence of stability in Europe. It is Russia's Asiatic policy that we resent and I trust people in Russia will ultimately see how disastrous it has been for their country.<sup>1</sup>

The defeat of Russia and the subsequent peace negotiations presented a unique opportunity both to the Dual and the Triple Alliance to enlarge its influence at the expense of the entente. Appropriately directed, German policy could now detach England, as Japan's ally, from France as Russia's. Thus Britain would be isolated; thus would be achieved the exclusion of Britain from Europe; and thus the grand Continental coalition of Russia, France, Italy, dominated by Germany, would come into existence. The coalition could proceed at its leisure to compensate Russia and the other constituents of the grand coalition, above all Germany, at British expense. It was the idea originally thought of by the Kaiser in 1896 and suggested by Germany to Russia in October, 1904. Germany was still interested in the idea and she took the initiative with Russia in organizing peace.

On June 9 the Kaiser secured the Czar's consent to end the war and informed the mediator, Theodore Roosevelt, who was thus enabled to complete negotiations for an armistice with the Japanese. The Kaiser immediately hurried preparations to take advantage of what was a convenient moment. The situation, however, was not free from factors that did not appear to be any too favourable. On June 28, 1905, Wilton reported to P.H.S. that even in reactionary circles resentment against Germany was growing. Public opinion, he said, no less than the bureaucracy, appreciated the fact that the Kaiser was taking advantage of the Czar's disasters in the Far East and distractions at home to bully Russia's one ally, France. The report was not yet taken tragically by P.H.S.; nor was the usefulness of Russian diplomatic support yet estimated at its true value. The comments of The Times upon Russia in Europe were limited to a recognition of her lack of efficiency and national unity, and to contrasting with it the energy of the Japanese. And it was clearly natural that since peace with the Japanese had been arranged by Roosevelt as the result of the Kaiser's initiative, the Czar should accept the Kaiser's personal invitation to talk about affairs.

At the meeting, which took place at Björkö on July 23-24, 1905, the Kaiser took the opportunity to revert to the Russo-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chirol to Wilton, April 25, 1905. (F. 5/72.)

German talks of the previous year, and the draft treaty to which they led. With some qualifications that treaty was now signed. It was to become valid as soon as peace was signed between Russia and Japan; when, too, the "steps necessary to initiate France into the accord and to associate herself in it as an ally" were also to be taken. The treaty bore the signatures of the Emperors. The Kaiser's delight was ecstatic but the treaty needed to be kept a close secret.

In Britain it had been borne in upon habitually anti-Russian minds that Germany would now be a substantial gainer from any breach between England and Russia. There was no doubt in London that Bülow's pressure, though nominally against France's policy in Morocco, was in fact designed to test the strength of the entente. By the summer it was hoped in P.H.S. that France would help towards the settlement of outstanding Russo-British issues in the Near and Middle East. In Chirol's words, "we are not inveterately hostile to Russia." But as the Germans were well aware, any Anglo-Russian rapprochement, even limited to the West, was inevitably blocked until peace reigned in the East. Here, unlike Germany, Britain was heavily handicapped. Apart altogether from recent occurrences that had embittered Anglo-Russian feeling, Britain could not offer terms for an entente still less for an alliance until her existing ally was satisfied with her position. Russia on her side could make no concessions in the Middle East while she was fighting in the Far East. The internal situation in Russia also provided an additional and acute difficulty. A British loan to Russia would finance domestic reaction, by strengthening the position of the bureaucracy against the constitutionalists, whom British public opinion strongly favoured. Finally, regarding both the Russian internal and external struggles, it was still far from clear to the City which side would win, and obviously it would not do to come to terms with the losing party. The same doubt produced in P.H.S. the same hesitation. Bell, informed by Wilton, with Walter, who was dominated by a proper pride in the dignity of The Times, were resolute against "Reaction." They looked for an uprising of the Constitutional Democrats and their allies. Wallace, on the contrary, believed that the bureaucracy was, and would remain, stable for some years. Whether his estimate of the relative strength of the reactionary and revolutionary forces was correct, only time would show. Bell was convinced that a new revolution was imminent and that it would accomplish its object, i.e., the establishment of a democratic legislative chamber on Western lines. The repressive

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measures to which the reactionaries were driven made the idea of a Russian entente most unpopular in Britain, as indeed it remained in some quarters right up to 1914. The question whether the repression was effective or not was answered in the negative by Walter and Bell. Wallace, on the other hand, was of the opinion that repression had postponed the revolution for a number of years. Moreover, the British dislike of foreign alliances and ententes was profound, far deeper in fact, than certain French circles could be made to believe. Throughout the Tangier crisis Delcassé had the conviction, and could not be shaken in it, that he had a "trump card" in British armed support. Hence, for him, at the Cabinet discussion of June 6, 1905, it was not the question whether England would go so far, but only whether Germany was bluffing; and he had no doubt that she was, and would draw back when she knew England would fight. His colleagues asked whether, if Germany were to press to extremes, British assistance would be effective in time. Rouvier pointed out that while the combined fleets could destroy German sea-power and England had nothing to fear, Germany would already have invaded France with an overwhelmingly superior army which they could not resist.

This fact seems to have made no impression in England, and perusal of the columns of The Times for the whole of this period provides no evidence that England realized that in order to save France she might have to send an expeditionary force to the Continent. The new Military Correspondent had been appointed on January 1, 1905. He was Colonel Charles à Court Repington. It was his conviction that England was no longer an island Power, but had become a "Continental" Power. He allowed the inference that military reforms were required; one day perhaps even conscription would come. Yet the "Continent" in question was not Europe but Asia; the destination of the large British "Continental" army was not Flanders but the N.W. frontier.<sup>2</sup> Repington, like Chirol, was still anti-Russian in Asia and not anti-German even in Europe. All that England and The Times promised France was the fullest diplomatic support. Apart from Lavino's single hint, nothing more was said at the time concerning material support. Delcassé was outvoted and resigned. The German threat had succeeded.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For the clearest exposition of the circumstances surrounding the British "pledge" to France in June, see R. W. Seton-Watson, *Britain in Europe* (Cambridge, 1938, p. 603). Delcassé insisted that he had warrant for believing that Britain was committed to act. Lansdowne disagreed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See The Times, April 1, 1905.

The motives of Germany, in the view of *The Times*, were not in doubt. Chirol expressed his view of the facts and their possibilities in a letter to Harris:

It becomes more and more clear that the main object of Germany was to prove to the French that no reliance could be placed upon an understanding with England unless it was countersigned by Berlin. There has seldom been a more unscrupulous campaign than that conducted by Germany in this matter. Tattenbach's conversation with you is only one instance in point. For his statement that Germany was acting on behalf of other powers was a pure invention as far as any powers that count are concerned, though she may have obtained some sort of semi-acquiescence in her programme from Belgium or Holland. Even Austria has fought shy of Germany's advances and Italy distinctly refused to have anything to do with them. You appear to me to overlook the fact that we are bound under Agreement to give France our diplomatic support, and I certainly can see nothing in the proposals for financial reorganization which she is alleged to have made at Fez that in any way exceeds the rights we have conceded to her under the same instrument.

If France thinks it expedient to come to terms with Germany, well and good: we shall certainly not object. But it is not for us to advise a surrender to claims which are put forward by Germany in order to make mischief between us and our neighbours across the Channel. The French no doubt have a difficult task, but we should be all the more careful not to add to their difficulties by unnecessarily harsh criticism or uncalled-for prophecies of failure. It would be a great pity if the British colony in Morocco were to adopt towards the French the same sort of pin-pricky attitude which the French in Egypt so long maintained towards our policy of "peaceful penetration" there.<sup>1</sup>

For Harris's particular benefit he added that, this being the opinion held at Printing House Square, it was inevitable that the fall of the French Foreign Minister should be regarded as a decided setback. Indeed, the resignation of Delcassé, Chirol admitted in a private letter to Lavino, proved that France had capitulated to "the big stick"; he was sufficiently insular in estimating the position of France to add that there was "an unpleasant feeling" in England "that we have been 'left'." Such a feeling was not expressed in the paper, but its existence in influential quarters indicates how far Britain was from understanding the realities of the French military situation. The Times, like the country generally, shared the attitude of Lansdowne; it was a political attitude. Rouvier, Delcassé's successor, was

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chirol to Harris, May 18, 1905. (F. 5/87.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Chirol to Lavino, June 19, 1905. (F. 5/105.)

### AFTER THE RESIGNATION OF DELCASSÉ

thus able to prove that Britain did not face the grim facts concerning German military superiority.

On this point also Chirol's observations to Lavino are enlightening. "The German invention about our having invited the French," he wrote," to enter into an offensive and defensive alliance against Germany seems to have fallen on singularly credulous ears in Paris-not of course amongst Ministers, etc., but in the press and financial circles." This would have seemed to Delcasse's friends a very curious observation in view of the ex-Minister's belief that some such offer had been made and that Paul Cambon believed Lansdowne to be on the brink of suggesting staff talks. It is difficult to imagine that Chirol was at this moment in close touch with the French Ambassador. On the other hand, Bertie, the British Ambassador in Paris, had talked about the need to give the entente "muscles"; Lavino's original hint came, perhaps, from that source. Its deeper significance, nevertheless, seems to have been appreciated no more in that Embassy than in Printing House Square.

As it was, the fall of Delcassé was felt in The Times office to be a heavy blow at the paper's pro-entente policy and at the basis of peace, delivered skilfully while Franco-British understanding was too young a growth for full confidence on either side to have developed. The structure raised by Delcassé might. it was feared, fall with him. The Times, having backed Delcassé to the last, naturally looked on his successor, Rouvier, with some questioning. The paper was, notwithstanding, so clearly ready to make the best of things that the new Minister at once recognized his own gain from the possession of its confidence. On the day of Delcassé's fall, Rouvier "sent for The Times correspondent . . . and stated to him that the policy of France with regard to Anglo-French understanding would remain exactly the same." Lavino, in consequence, was able to send a reassuring dispatch: "I am able to state that it is M. Rouvier's intention to change nothing in the policy of the Anglo-French entente. His friendly disposition towards England has long been freely manifested." (June 7, 1905.) This sentiment was repeated in a leading article which, while praising Delcassé, admitted that he had committed political blunders and proceeded to emphasize its steady hope of a development of the entente under the new régime. Thus it became quickly evident that the shock of Delcasse's fall, considerable as it was, to Anglo-French understanding, by no means altered the intention of his successor to support the entente, or of The Times to support him in doing so. Meanwhile the Germans were looking on with resentment at the behaviour of Rouvier.

His assurance to Lavino made it necessary, they thought, to insist that France should not forget that certain lessons were to be learnt from the Delcassé incident. Professor Schiemann was employed to write a series of articles in the *Kreuz-Zeitung* describing the *entente* policy as part of an English "plot" to provoke war with Germany. Fresh nervousness broke out in Paris when this new manifestation of Bülow's dissatisfaction was studied in combination with Lansdowne's continued silence on the subject of military conversations.

Bülow, the Germans thought, had taken the correct measure of general French feeling; his policy towards Delcassé had triumphed and he had his reward. Interviewed in the *Temps* Schiemann demanded a reversal of French policy and in its place a Franco-German understanding; and war talk buzzed in Paris. It was realized that the essence of the situation remained the same: that in the event of a war between Germany and Britain, Germany would invade France before Britain could help her, and that although Germany might lose her fleet and her colonies, she could then compensate herself at French expense. That Germany did mean business seemed manifest, since in reward for Delcassé's fall, Count Bülow was created a Prince by the Kaiser.

By the beginning of June the atmosphere in the Capitals was less electric. In Paris, particularly, a quieter tone prevailed. In Berlin, after the triumph of June 6, a feeling of heaviness was created when it was known that the British Navy was preparing for a cruise. Saunders, reporting on August 3, referred to "the apprehensions which were aroused in this country with regard to the intentions of the British Admiralty in sending the Channel Fleet for an autumn cruise in the Baltic." They were subsiding, he said, but were "succeeded by a feeling of sullen rancour," which meant that, despite protestations to the contrary, Germany is highly sensitive to any movement on the part of Britain. The Correspondent quoted from a German journal:

Anti-English feeling in Berlin, in the form in which it manifested itself during the Boer war, and especially in which it was exhibited at the time of the visit of Generals Botha and De Wet, has burst out once more into a blaze. The announcement of the British naval demonstration in the Baltic and the attendant comments of the Pan-German and anti-Semitic Press are the cause of it. In competent financial and commercial circles this animosity against England is but little, if at all, in evidence, but its virulence among the younger members of the educated classes, among the officials and teachers, and among the junior officers and others more than compensates for

<sup>1</sup> Schiemann, Kreuz-Zeitung, June 7, 14, 1905.

#### SAUNDERS ON GERMAN MOTIVES

its absence elsewhere. In every place where a number of people come together the bitterest language is used with regard to England, and more than one observer has been struck by the fact that the Moroccan question did not arouse feeling against France in an even remotely equivalent degree. M. Delcassé was blamed, perhaps, but there was no excitement about it. Now, however, the old rancorous hatred of the Boer war days seems to have been revived. Otherwise it would be difficult to explain the rapidity with which feeling against England has reached this pitch.

At length the Sultan's demand for a conference, which Harris had foreshadowed and encouraged, was accepted by Rouvier and consequently by Britain. The settling of the time, place and agenda occupied months, during which The Times pressed home upon British readers an interpretation of the incidents of the Delcassé resignation, the Sultan's rejection with German support, of the French plan, the French unwilling acceptance of a conference and the obvious German intention to exploit it. Henceforth The Times conducted its policy upon the firm belief that the Germans had little or no valid interest in Morocco: that Bülow's real purpose was to exploit the Russian defeats by frightening France, already engaged in conversations with Italy, out of the entente with Britain and into association with Germany. That highly influential circles in Berlin were engaged in a drive towards a Europe dominated by Germany became a fundamental element of the policy which The Times was to express in the period after the first Morocco crisis.

The view was buttressed by the now fully accepted authority of Saunders. *The Times* of October 10, 1905, printed a dispatch from him, which related the Moroccan incident to a general line of action on the part of the German Foreign Office:

What Germany desired, and very probably still desires, is that France should lend a willing ear to German proposals for co-operation in the sphere of *Weltpolitik*, and, in fact, should lend her weight to a non-existent but frequently mooted Continental coalition against British interests.

When the agreement to arrange a conference was announced at the end of September, 1905, rumour credited the Russian minister, Witte, with successful intervention. *The Times*, scouting this explanation of the somewhat unexpected German willingness to meet France on the framing of the agenda, sought it rather in the signature on September 5, of peace between Japan and Russia. The attitude of Britain towards Russia and her am-

bitions on the Indian frontiers and in the East, had for years been one of doubt. While, it has been seen, *The Times* had been strongly suspicious and critical, France as Russia's ally naturally regarded the criticisms with misgivings. Six months ago, Paul Cambon had constantly expressed his annoyance at the paper's attacks on Russia's financial credit.<sup>1</sup> Now that the war was over, Russian need for money had become extremely urgent. As early as June (i.e., immediately after Tsushima), Chirol wrote to Steed, "The financial situation is beginning to get serious. The last internal loan was not a real success, and the Treasury Bills which have since been sold by hook or by crook in Berlin, have only paid the outstanding bills for the Baltic fleet, and this represents merely, and in the strictest sense of the term, money thrown into the water." Russia, in fact, had been compelled by financial as well as internal and external policy to end the war.

The peace negotiations at Port mouth, New Hampshire. convened in August, 1905, were attended on behalf of The Times by Morrison from Peking, Smalley from Washington, and Wallace from London. Although Wallace attended as a "Special Correspondent" of The Times, he had been received by King Edward VII on the eve of his departure and entrusted with messages for President Roosevelt and Witte, the Russian delegate. unnaturally, there was friction between the Correspondents: to be precise, between Smalley and the other two. devoted himself to the side which was prepared to give him the best facilities, the greatest amount of news, and the fullest degree of confidence. As the Russians were the most communicative, Smalley ardently espoused their cause. position as resident Washington Correspondent of the paper gave him the right to forward all telegrams and The Times appeared in a highly unusual role. It became necessary for Bell to instruct Smalley to avoid identifying himself with the Russian point of view while not neglecting to present their case. It was necessary, also, to omit from his telegrams paragraphs deemed offensive to "our allies." That Smalley had hitherto taken high rank as a Russophobe was held in some quarters to justify the view that The Times had come under a new influence. The Germans did not at all know what to make of it.

Chirol, who had visited Washington the previous autumn, and had returned with the view that some substitute for Smalley would be needed shortly, took the strongest exception

<sup>1</sup> See supra, p. 408.



GEORGE WILLIAM SMALLEY

to his methods and policy.<sup>1</sup> The methods to which objection was taken were adopted by Smalley largely as the result of a new arrangement Bell had entered into with a New York paper which agreed, on terms favourable to *The Times*, to print his messages. The American standpoint also had its influence upon Smalley. This was why his August messages assumed a character that was as much anti-Japanese as pro-Russian. Bell's corrective was definite:

The tone of your messages hitherto, with their implied or explicit disapproval of Japanese attitude, produces very undesirable impression especially abroad. You have probably not realized, but Wallace knows the important reasons why we must be governed not by wisdom or unwisdom of Japanese methods, but by fundamental justice of Japanese demands and by closeness of political ties.

Naturally, the contemporary American view of Japanese policy was of no assistance to Bell in his effort to induce Smalley to take British world-policy into consideration; nor, equally, did Bell's new arrangement for Smalley's messages to be reproduced in an American journal. But the success of Smalley's service to the American newspaper earned a letter of congratulation from Bell which gave him much gratification. It was not Bell's habit to scatter bouquets before the Correspondents, and when Chirol learnt of his benediction to Smalley he took instant fire. For Chirol, Smalley was a Correspondent ignorant of the very ABC of such high matters as international relationships; the political effects of news-reporting were totally disregarded by him; Smalley's dispatches may have been immensely readable, but they were also immensely indiscreet. In measured but bitter terms Chirol expressed his utter disapproval:

I cannot help regretting that you should have gone out of your way to convey the approval of *The Times* to Smalley for work which to my mind would have justified very severe censure. Just because you were away I forbore from telegraphing to him as strongly as I was inclined to do; and that you should have so entirely disregarded my views in this matter cannot but lead me to suspect that your flattering references to myself are a testimony rather to your personal friendliness than to any regard you really entertain for my judgment in matters which so closely affect the efficiency and repute of the department you have entrusted me with.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Smalley had been transferred from New York to Washington against his will by Chirol, whose recommendation, made on his visit in the autumn of 1904, had been accepted by Bell. Speck von Sternberg, the German Ambassador, immediately reported to the Wilhelmstrasse a story to the effect that Chirol's purpose was to keep a closer watch on German diplomacy in America. "Personally, I am not displeased with this change. Firstly, Mr. Smalley is removed by that from the pro-English circles of the so-called Four Hundred of New York, and, secondly, I can keep his doings at Washington better under observation and expose him more easily if he should use unfair methods." Sternberg to Foreign Office, February 10, 1905. (G.P. XIX, p. 572.)

I write to you, as you see very frankly, because of this, at least, I am assured—that our friendship is such as to bear with frankness.1

Smalley's answers to Bell were those of the good newsman: "Where, I ask you as a journalist, should we have been without news?" and secondly, "I don't deny that I try to put things in a readable form." He was, he said, neither Japanese nor Russian; just a journalist.<sup>2</sup> Smalley was, indeed, a master of the craft. Even Bell, however, could not turn him into a diplomatist. Both Wallace and Morrison found it impossible to cooperate with him, and it was fortunate that the Conference was not of long duration. On September 6, 1905, the treaty between Russia and Japan was signed.

Peace presented the Powers with the need to make a new assessment of the balance of forces. There was also the forth-coming conference over Morocco. The opportunity brought before Britain and France, and equally before Germany, Austria and Italy, a consideration of new possibilities. Lavino reported in *The Times*, of October 10, 1905, that:

There are some influential French statesmen at work outside the Government endeavouring to promote an improvement of relations between England and Russia, a circumstance which alone proves to what extent the Anglo-French *entente* itself is appreciated and valued among leading French politicians.

But such steps were to be taken very guardedly. Lavino quoted the Temps as expressing Rouvier's view that England's friendship was precious, but that an alliance, bound to arouse keen anxiety in Germany, might be a source of strength to England rather than to France. "Apart from the Russian alliance, French policy is and ought to remain one of courteous autonomy." The hint did not pass unobserved that England needed to move towards Russia if the entente with France was to continue cordial. And French apprehension grew with the intensification of the German aggressiveness in the French and German Press. Polemics were of a character unexampled for many years. Delcassé. it was now obvious, had been sacrificed in vain; the agreement to confer appeared only to open the way for more German pressure and more French surrenders. The German Press was clearly instructed to prepare France accordingly. Counsels of moderation addressed to French journalists were no longer of the slightest use. As Lavino reported in The Times of October 21, 1905:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chirol to Bell, September 1, 1905. <sup>2</sup> Smalley to Bell, August 31, 1905.

#### A TURNING TOWARDS RUSSIA

The French Press cannot be expected to leave unanswered the preposterous question put to them by the Frankfurter Zeitung, and quoted in your Berlin correspondence this morning, as to what would be the attitude of France in the event of an Anglo-German war. In presence of such audacious impertinence French newspapers cannot remain silent. The tone of the German Press towards this country not having materially changed even after M. Delcassé's resignation and the still more recent conclusion of the Franco-German agreement on the subject of Morocco, it has now been realized what Germany is driving at, and I hold from many competent sources that throughout France there is growing indignation at the unjustifiable treatment to which Germany would subject the Republic, and a resolve, expressed with a unanimity seldom witnessed, to consolidate and strengthen the entente with Great Britain.

Under the pressure of these facts the attitude of *The Times* towards Russia began to soften. It was now realized more keenly that she was France's ally. On October 11, 1905, a leading article went so far as to say that:

With regard to Russia our minds are equally clear and equally easy. We look forward, and look forward with some confidence, to a great improvement hereafter in our relations with that Power. We know, however, that, as the *Novosti* observes in the sensible article quoted by our Paris Correspondent, there are powerful influences adverse to so great a change in the traditional policy of that Empire. We know that it is difficult to combat such influences, and that to combat them with success time is required.... Then, and not till then, will the consummation desired by our French friends come within the range of practical politics.

The Germans at the time were in a stronger position than was suspected in the office. The Björkö Treaty, signed on July 23, due to be ratified and to come into force had so far remained secret. The Czar told his Foreign Ministers of the new commitment on September 12. Lamsdorff, the Foreign Secretary, was horrorstricken. Witte, the Russian Minister of Finance, returning from Portsmouth through Berlin, in September, was received by the Kaiser and, with the Czar's permission, was told of the treaty. On his arrival at St. Petersburg, however, his colleagues, who were now possessed of the text of the treaty, had no difficulty in convincing him that it was inconsistent with Russia's treaty with France, and, secondly, that France could not and would not associate herself.

<sup>1</sup> Even Wallace had only a slight notion of what had been done at Björkö and nothing of the Russian refusal to ratify; see *supra*, p. 418; and Wallace to Knollys, January 28, 1906. (Windsor Archives.)

It was not until November 23, 1905, that the Czar informed the Kaiser that the draft treaty needed revision. Thus the German effort to break the Entente Cordiale and to create an anti-British coalition in its place failed. Inevitably and immediately one consequence of the failure was an increase of solidarity between France and Russia. Less immediate was the reaction upon Britain. She had renewed her alliance with Japan in August, 1905, a fact that was not announced until after the peace with Russia. But while the new Japanese treaty was disagreeable to Russia and France, neither Power was now willing to encourage Germany, and it did not escape the attention of the Powers that the renewed Japanese treaty, by ensuring for Britain the support in Eastern waters of the Japanese navy, permitted the withdrawal of ships from the China Station to the Mediterranean, Atlantic, and North Sea bases. By the autumn a better feeling between Britain and Russia was noticeable.

Wilton (the interim representative who had acted since the expulsion of Braham in 1903)¹ was given a measure of recognition. He had become a wholehearted partisan of the Constitutional Democrats, the party that was to become the strongest in the First Duma. He had succeeded in making contact with Isvolsky, and became a channel for conciliatory statements. In October, 1905, Lansdowne testified to Hardinge that "His Excellency [Benckendorff] referred with much satisfaction to the tone of the English newspapers, and particularly to the article which appeared in *The Times* of yesterday—an article which, as I reminded him, was founded upon information supplied to *The Times* by its St. Petersburg correspondent, and apparently derived from official sources."<sup>2</sup>

The article in question—a communication by Wilton from St. Petersburg—discussed the Anglo-Japanese Treaty and proceeded to consider future Anglo-Russian relations. The Russian Government regarded time, patience and mutual good will as necessary to the overcoming of the difficulties in the way. There was not the least disposition in high quarters to contest the advisability, in itself, of an agreement. But owing to the military disasters, &c., the Government wished to avoid the appearance of being publicly dragged into an agreement. Meanwhile Russia realized that she alone was the cause, if not the object, of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, but this did not prevent, or impede, an Anglo-Russian understanding to the extent that competition in Persia might. Britain's abstention from a forward policy in the Middle East during Russia's difficulties would be convincing evidence of

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 382-3, ante. 2 G. and T., Vol. IV, p. 205.

her good will. "I am able, on the other hand, to state most emphatically that Russia does not contemplate any railway schemes in Persia... and that she does not dream of initiating a forward policy there." (October 2, 1905.)

During the autumn the arrangements for the Morocco Conference which the Germans had imposed upon France gradually took shape. An International Conference in the New Year was not in the least welcome to Moberly Bell; the years 1904-1905 had been expensive for The Times. The war in the Far East had been reported by Lionel James, who had served the paper as a special Foreign Correspondent in several parts of the world since 1900. He had been an outstanding success in the South African War, where he had been answerable to Amery. He, with Bell's agreement, had made arrangements for him to join Lord Roberts's staff and his dispatches won back for The Times much of the leadership it had lost during the previous generation. In more recent years he had reported the Balkan wars. In 1904 he was instructed to hold himself in readiness to proceed at instant notice to the Far East. The Correspondent travelled to the East, by way of America, in the company of the wireless inventor De Forest. The wireless tackle was secretly shipped from San Francisco and the Correspondent chartered in Hongkong and had delivered to Wei-hai-wei the fast steamer Haimun, of 1,200 tons. It was fitted with the De Forest system which enabled the steamer to act as a mobile transmitting station. The need for a wireless receiving station was supplied at Wei-hai-wei where David Fraser, who had accompanied James as his assistant, had, in the face of extreme technical difficulty, succeeded in erecting a fixed wireless receiving station. The work was completed just before the Japanese began their surprise attack upon the Russian battleships in Port Arthur. The first wireless press message from the theatre of war sent from ship to shore was dispatched on March 14, 1904. James's efforts to procure the earliest news took him to Tokyo where he made friends with Admiral Saito, subchief of the Japanese Naval Ministry. By persuading the Admiral that he should place upon the Haimun a Japanese naval officer who should act as Intelligence Officer as well as censor James made further valuable economies in the time taken for his dispatches. The device was a dangerous one. On one cruise, while steaming alone, a Russian cruiser ordered the Haimun to "heaveto." The boarding party gave James a turn, for he had on board the Japanese Naval censor; he was in mufti. His presence would surely lead to the capture of the Haimun as a prize of war, and James himself would have to face a Russian court-martial for espionage and, what would be hardly less painful, an inquiry at Printing House Square. Happily, the Japanese censor, disguised as a Malay steward, assured James of his intention to commit suicide if detected. In the meantime Fraser in Wei-haiwei had received from James the wireless message: URGENT WE ARE ABOUT TO BE BOARDED BY RUSSIANS UNLESS YOU HEAR FROM US WITHIN THREE HOURS INFORM COMMISSIONER SENIOR NAVAL OFFICER AND TIMES LONDON. For three hours Fraser sat in the wireless hut listening to Russian and Japanese morse signals. Suddenly, a loud spark was heard. "That's Brown, the operator in the *Haimun*" declared Alhearn, the shore operator. The situation was saved.

The Haimun cost The Times £1,500 a month, and other local charges amounted to another £500 a month. The cost of transmission was enormous. Bell told James that he calculated that the telegrams cost The Times 20/- per word. The new medium of communication did not, it must be confessed, altogether satisfy the Manager. Breakdowns were not infrequent; and, in the absence of an alternative, The Times was beaten by its rivals. On balance, however, the campaign ended with The Times bearing the honours. The expense was considerable by any standards; to Moberly Bell in 1904 it was almost unbearable. The costs of the Peace Conference in New Hampshire brought the 1905 costs of the foreign service up still higher. The sending of Wallace, Morrison and Smalley to the Conference was an expense out of proportion to the income of the paper. But the standard of the paper, even in the years of its poverty, required that Printing House Square should be worthily represented. No effort was spared to keep abreast of Russian developments. Wallace pressed upon Bell the necessity of respecting the simple fact that Russia, by her size and resources, and despite her defeats in Asia, remained a power in Europe.

In a few months after the peace it became obvious to the world that talks were being conducted between Britain and Russia and that they concerned something more important and novel than Russia's chronic need for capital. Accordingly, Wilton is soon found sending longer and more frequent messages. He continued to meet with difficulties, and on December 27, 1905, apologized to Bell for the fact that a letter and telegram which he sent to the frontier had not been posted and that the messenger had absconded. It was one of a number of incidents that *The Times* was not inclined to disregard; but, at the time, the Chief Proprietor and the Manager were facing anxieties of a domestic order that left them little leisure in which to solve problems in St. Petersburg.

# XIV

# THE TIMES IN ADVERSITY AND LITIGATION

ROM the very beginning of his Chief Proprietorship, Walter was distracted by the agitation of certain members of the body of eighty or more proprietors holding for the most part minute subdivisions of shares in The Times. The first volume of this History has recorded that, within less than thirty years of the death of the founder of the journal, his son realized that a single dissentient among the body, if he or she carried obstruction, however frivolously based, far enough, might render the Chief Proprietor's policy impossible, his situation intolerable and, finally, jeopardize the existence of the paper. John Walter II, Thomas Barnes and William Delane all knew that, while the will of John Walter I provided against interference by the Proprietors with the Chief Proprietor and Manager in the direction of the newspaper, the position of both sides with regard to the accounts was left indefinite. The first Walter, realizing "that by dissention and difference of opinion between the parties as to the mode of their [The Times and Evening Mail] being conducted, the property may be injured and the fabrics I have raised tumble to the ground," in consequence resolved, "and it is my will, and I direct, that my son John may and shall continue to have the sole management of the said papers." On the subject of charges and profits the will directed merely that

my son John shall be paid by the proprietors of the said newspaper, called *The Times*, for his conduct and management of the said newspaper at the rate . . . of £1000 per annum for every year that the said newspaper shall produce over and above the said £1000 a net profit of £5000 per annum or upwards. And in case in any year the net profit . . . shall be less than £5000 per annum then that the said annual salary of £1000 shall be reduced at and after the rate of £20 for every £100 the said profits shall be less than the said £5000 in each year.

The will gave no directions as to the preparation of accounts or the verification of charges for the salaries of editors, writers, expenses of news collection or distribution of papers. It prescribed only that the accounts should be made up half-yearly.

Next, the will was silent upon the matter, all-important as it turned out, of printing. It could have laid upon the proprietors the obligation to print The Times at Printing House Square: or it could have left them explicitly free to print it where they chose. The proprietors, however, were not even organized in the will: they were not instructed or otherwise empowered to hold any meeting for the purpose of discussing together their common interests either among themselves or with the attendance of the Chief Proprietor and Manager. The one and only provision as to figures was that if the profit fell below £5,000 the salary of the Chief Proprietor and Manager automatically fell in proportion. Apparently John Walter I considered that the prospect of such a penalty would guarantee the diligence and fidelity of his second son in his own interest as one of the proprietors and also as Manager of The Times in the interest of others who were. in the main, members of the family.

The first Walter's omission to give directions concerning adjudication of accounts was characteristic of one who, like most men of the period, though he had not said as much in his will, regarded the newspaper as the by-product of the printing business; and, moreover, to whom, as to all the eighteenth-century men of business, the auditing of books was unknown. It was inevitable. in the absence of some organization of the proprietors, that friction must develop between a Chief Proprietor who also possessed the status of Manager of The Times and fellow proprietors who possessed rights but no status. The will did nothing to remove a source of potential friction that promised, in time, to be much more serious than any attempt on the part of certain proprietors to interfere, for example, with the political line which the Manager thought fit, for whatever reason, to pursue. Walter I, who had made no restrictions, as he was entitled to do. upon the proprietors' choice of printer or place of printing and publication, tacitly left it to be assumed that the "absolute power of the Manager" conferred upon that manager qua printer the liberty to charge a rate of payment for his work as printer, which the will also left unrestricted. This tacit assumption it was clearly to the permanent interest of the Manager to adopt. But, it would be reasonable to expect, if he did adopt it, there would arise among the proprietors, at some time in the future, should dividends fall, a suspicion that he was receiving too much profit from printing; was, in fact, taking advantage of his position to overcharge his relations. If some of the

#### THE TIMES AND ITS PRINTER

proprietors thought fit to challenge the fairness of the printing charges, and ask that they should be reduced, larger interests might be involved, in which the Chief Proprietor in his double capacity of Manager of *The Times* and owner of the printing business would find himself both a judge and advocate in his own case. This is precisely what happened.

The Times was founded, as the first volume of this History has explained, in order to make work for Walter's logographic press. When the logographic experiment was abandoned, books and pamphlets were composed by the old separate type method and printed on the premises side by side with The Times and the Evening Mail, and jobs continued to be so worked until 1815, under the imprint of "John Walter, Printing House Square, Blackfriars." This printing business of John Walter I, it is essential to remember, did not come into the possession of Walter II by his father's will, but by previous purchase. On May 14, 1812, in consideration of paying his father an annuity, there was assigned to him "all that capital messuage of the King's Printing House and premises heretofore in the tenure of the Printer of Her Late Majesty Queen Anne." Consequently, when Walter I died seven months later, his son was already the freehold owner and occupier of the printing office which produced The Times. Had the will named the price, or the percentage of profit, which the father thought the son should charge, and the paper pay, for the printing, there can be little doubt that the prescription would have been refused by the printer. The probability is that Walter II would have preferred to start a new paper: he would have said that it was to his interest to keep The Times as an adjunct to his printing office only if his authority extended to the control of all its payments, including those for composition and press-work. That this would have been his view in 1814 is borne out by his affidavit in 1839 when a proprietor, Mrs. Murray, accused him of overcharging. Walter II replied that he was entitled to refuse the use of his premises except upon his own terms. 1 At this time William Delane pointed out to Walter that a new arrangement with the proprietors, to which he thought he could get their agreement, should be made. "Unless something of the kind is done I fear that at some future time your property will be exposed to great risk and the paper to destruction," Delane wrote on March 9, 1839. The matter, however, was more difficult than he supposed and Walter was forced to drop it. The risk of destruction "at some future time" did not present itself for two generations. It was not until 1898 that the fourth Walter was

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. I, p. 180.

forced, by a claim exactly similar to Mrs. Murray's, to state that, as hereditary sole proprietor of the office and manager of the business conducted therein, he was entitled to name the figure which he, also hereditary Chief Proprietor and Manager of The Times, would accept for printing it in the works of which he was the owner with his half-brother Godfrey. The basis of the objection taken by the earlier proprietors to this claim of the Chief Proprietor was at first merely theoretical or personal The objectors in Arthur Walter's later period, however, were by no means ignorant of one supremely practical consideration which could be urged against the system by which Printing House Square as a whole was managed. They knew that in comparison with the figures in his father's best time, say in the seventies. the present dividend was not only much less than it had been but that it was diminishing with monotonous regularity. During Arthur Walter's first decade of responsibility the earnings of the paper decreased with startling rapidity. When challenged he was inclined to take it for granted that as the proprietors had never paid a penny for their shares, they ought to be grateful even for small dividends from The Times.

It had been overlooked that in 1819 and 1827 John Walter II had sold for cash certain shares in The Times to Thomas Barnes. T. M. Alsager, James Murray, Edward Sterling, George Hicks and Thomas Platt. The descendants of some of these proprietors were by no means indifferent to their dividends; nor were those proprietors who were members of the Walter family and owed their shares to that fact. The dividend was distributed by Soames. the solicitor to the paper, who forwarded it with a brief formal letter to each proprietor mentioning only the figure on his accompanying cheque. It was understood that any proprietor was welcome to inspect the books of *The Times*, but no account was sent with the remittance. This was the manner in which the undertaking was managed in the time of Walter III and this was the manner in which his sons were educated to continue it. The position, as the third Walter understood it, of the hereditary Chief Proprietor vis-à-vis his co-proprietors was described in a memorandum dated August 17, 1866, addressed "To my sons John and Arthur." The occasion of writing was that their father had finished a draft of his will. After outlining its main provisions he proceeded to give warning that it was "the duty of you both to watch over the concern with the utmost diligence and attention, and I particularly advise you to conduct its affairs in the same manner in which they have hitherto been conducted by my own Father and by myself. . . . And should any attempt be made by

## THE EFFECT OF SMALL DIVIDENDS

any of your co-proprietors in *The Times* to interfere with you in the management of the concern; I strongly recommend you—subject to the best legal advice you can obtain—to apply to the Court of Chancery for the sale of the said paper, rather than submit to any such interference."

This then was the constitution of the "concern" during the whole of the period of John Walter III. He lived to conduct it for twenty-eight years after the date of writing the memorandum just quoted. As long as Soames's communication covered increasing dividends, as in Walter III's best period, no proprietor asked any question upon the figures, or criticized the Chief Proprietor's management. The depressing regularity of diminishing dividends under Arthur Walter, however, led disappointed recipients first to question his policy and, when disregarded, to resent his methods; to counter-attack by objecting to his printing profits and, when they were refused any explanation, to accuse him of the assumption of autocratic powers. Finally, it was sought by some to establish the novel claim that the Chief Proprietor and Manager was merely the agent of the proprietors.

Walter actually judged the claim to be inadmissible, but he genuinely sympathized with those who feared that in the near future losses might become still more serious. He did not see any reason to believe that the losses were his personal responsibility. It was true that The Times was paying a diminishing dividend; but the Standard, so long the paper's chief competitor, was also paying none and was rapidly losing its position. It was also the fact that other London newspapers were in even worse circumstances than The Times. The situation at Printing House Square was obviously not satisfactory, but the fact was that with the exception of the Daily Telegraph and Daily Mail the London newspaper trade as a whole was not flourishing. There was too much competition, as Walter pointed out. The trade had not adjusted itself to the situation created by the repeal in 1855 of the stamp tax. Nor was it only the older papers that found it difficult to pay. The newest foundation, the Daily Express, Walter could have informed them, was not in the position to pay any dividend. The direct loss on that paper before the addition of interest charges from its foundation in 1900 to December 31, 1906, amounted to £60,000. Other morning papers whose price had been reduced to a penny and to a halfpenny were doing little more than making ends meet.

Walter sympathized with the proprietors for another reason. He realized, as his father did, that the law would probably regard the liabilities of those who owned a share in the profits of the paper as not limited. The Chief Proprietor, however, had no power to turn the ownership of The Times from what it was. a partnership-at-will, into what its position required and what contemporary business organization was providing for other newspapers—namely, the fabric of a limited liability company. But, failing the unanimous consent of the proprietors, the conversion of the present partnership-at-will into a limited liability company could only be secured by a private Act of Parliament. Walter took advice on this course but there seemed to be no chance of such a Bill passing the House of Commons owing to the hostility of the Irish Party, quite apart from the obstruction which might be offered by others who owed The Times a grudge. Moreover, Walter knew, as did his father and for the same reasons. that there were grudging and litigious proprietors who would vote against any partnership scheme, company, or corporation suggested by the Chief Proprietor.

As early as 1897 Walter felt compelled to seek counsel's opinion regarding certain points in the constitution of The Times which vitally affected his primary right as holder of two of the onesixteenth shares in the paper, and his second as the owner of two-thirds (the remaining third being held by his half-brother Godfrey) of the printing business. Mr. Montague Cookson and Mr. Justice Bray were of opinion that Walter could, if he wished. divest himself of his responsibility, under the will of John Walter I, for managing, editing, and printing The Times by giving six months' notice to the body of the proprietors; alternatively, like any other proprietor, he had in certain circumstances the right to force a sale of the property and himself obtain leave to bid for it as a purchaser. No steps were taken in 1897. Some not very positive discussions of ways and means, however, took place in the spring of 1898. There was brewing, it seemed, a dispute. So much was known, but none then knew how serious it was or what it might cost or how long it might go on. It had started years earlier.

Mrs. Clara Frances Sibley, a daughter of Sir Robert Carden and a grand-daughter of John Walter I, was known to be independent in her views, for she had refused to sign the "release" by which John Walter III appointed Arthur Walter as joint manager with him. This occurred in 1885. Mrs. Sibley possessed by inheritance three-twenty-fifths of three-sixteenths and one-twenty-fifth of one-sixteenth, making in all one-fortieth share in *The Times*. Nothing happened for several years, but the unin-

terrupted diminution in the payments to the proprietors finally led her to take action. The matter of Sibley v. Walter was destined to occupy the attention of seventeen firms of solicitors and cost some £25,000 before it was concluded in 1906. It was in the spring of 1893 that Mrs. Sibley decided to make assignments of portions of her share. Her motive was to forward a demand for an inspection of accounts. In order still further to strengthen the hands of those among the proprietors who agreed with her, she endeavoured, or purported, in the early part of the year to assign to her son all rights and interests in her share. This assignment, however, was not registered; Mrs. Sibley had a reason for not disclosing her plan to Soames, and he was not informed until 1895. During this long time Mrs. Sibley was endeavouring to secure the assistance of a practical man of affairs who, if possible, should possess an intimate knowledge of the newspaper business as then conducted. Thus with more than ordinary dilatoriness, but not with the less perseverance, Mrs. Sibley delayed the prosecution of her intention.

It was not until the spring of 1898, through her son Dr. Sibley, that she took the step of applying by letter to a complete stranger, Alfred Harmsworth. He was naturally interested in learning the details of *The Times* situation as a whole, also that Mrs. Sibley was determined, if necessary, to bring an action against Walter. Harmsworth had no difficulty in making up his mind to buy any fraction of Mrs. Sibley's remaining share in *The Times* that he could acquire; but whether he thought of joining with any section of the proprietors against Walter does not appear. His first step was to ask for an interview with Walter at the office and to listen to what he had to say.

In March, 1898, Harmsworth came for the first time to Printing House Square and there learnt from Walter's lips that the sale to him of any share or portion would not be admitted. If Harmsworth doubted the legality of the verdict, he was to find it upheld in Court, the Judge relying upon Soames's account of the history of *The Times*. He said that no share or part of share had ever been left by will to anyone who was not a member of the holder's family or a trustee for such a member. "I know of no case," Soames incorrectly wrote as regards the facts to Walter, "in which a stranger has been brought in by will. Certainly the proprietors would not be bound to recognize as co-proprietor anyone attempted to be so brought in." The real question, of course, was the power of a proprietor to transfer a share, or portion, outside the family during the lifetime of the holder. As the transfer to Harmsworth was disallowed, Mrs. Sibley

## THE TIMES IN ADVERSITY AND LITIGATION

offered a moiety of her share to her eldest son, and on July 23, 1898, she informed Soames accordingly.

Walter Knowsley Sibley was a distinguished member of the medical profession, a surgeon, and the author of a number of specialist publications still in demand. A man of combative temperament, he was well fitted to undertake the task set him hy his mother of securing the particulars upon which a prudent judgment as to the management and solvency of Printing House Square could be based. At the beginning of 1899 he asked Soames for the names of the auditors, the date of the last audit, and other questions. At the same time, opposition to Walter came from another section of the proprietors. An anonymous but pointed circular was sent by post to all the proprietors. It reviewed the progressive decline of the dividends in recent years and complained that "the Standard and Telegraph were more attractive than The Times to the ordinary householder" and asserted that "The Times cannot afford to stand still on the strength of the reputation of a predominant ascendancy which existed fifty years ago, but which no longer exists because of the competition of other journals run on newer and more up-to-date lines." The circular itself and, even more, the manner of its issue were resented by Walter; but no move was made by him.

Meanwhile, Dr. Sibley was engaged in the effort to secure access to the account-books and to a balance-sheet. It was not long before he instructed a firm of solicitors to obtain certain particulars from Soames. On January 28, 1900, the solicitors asked questions and incidentally affirmed that the constant "attenuation of the dividends had now reduced the proprietary to that of a bare framework on which the printing ramifications of the Managers flourish." Soames's answer embodied a reminder. intended as a warning, of Walter's true position. "It would be impossible to conduct the affairs of a great journal like The Times" Soames wrote "if there was to be constant friction caused by the interference of some of the proprietors with those to whom has been entrusted the Management. If there were such interference we have authority for saying the Managers would be within their rights if they declined further to print or publish the paper." Soames also hinted that no benefit could result to the paper or its proprietors if a dissolution of the partnership was brought about and concluded with a direct refusal to allow "a general roving commission" of inquiry into the accounts. Soames's warnings had an unintended effect. Mrs. Sibley became even more determined upon a general inquiry into the position. Her solicitors were instructed to press the matter and later in the

#### HARMSWORTH AND SIBLEY

year Soames was prevailed upon to agree that Mrs. Sibley's accountants should inspect the books of *The Times*.

This was the first occasion in the history of Printing House Square that a proprietor had succeeded in a demand to investigate the accounts. Nearly twelve months passed before Walter, Bell, and Soames found it convenient to assemble them for inspection. When, too, Mrs. Sibley's accountants were dissatisfied with the books finally produced, and asked to see vouchers, further delays ensued. Mrs. Sibley, in the interval, reverted to the possibility of giving Harmsworth a legal *locus standi* in the action she had now fully determined to bring. In January, 1901, application to the Court of Chancery was made in Mrs. Sibley's name for the hearing of her question whether the Chief Proprietor had the right to refuse to recognize the assignment of a share otherwise than to an existing proprietor.

During the long interval between Mrs. Sibley's application and the hearing Harmsworth, at five and thirty years of age, was thinking of what he could do with *The Times*. "There is nothing," he wrote to Blumenfeld who was then discussing machinery with Godfrey Walter, "I would like better in all the world than to obtain control of *The Times*. I do not think they are getting on too well over there and might care to sell. If I went to them they would at once refuse me. Will you make them an offer instead? You know the Walters and they may care to deal with you. I've got a million pounds in Consols and I authorize you to pay up to that sum. It will be a great coup if you can get it."

Two years later Harmsworth made a direct approach:

Confidential

May 30, 1902

Dear Sir,

You treated me so frankly a few years ago that I should like to have a few minutes' private conversation with you concerning a Dr. Sibley, who has been bothering me a great deal lately, but with whom I have declined to hold any communication.

I shall be in London on Monday afternoon, and could call and see you at four o'clock, but am then leaving Town for some time.

Yours faithfully,

ALFRED HARMSWORTH.

At this, his second interview, Harmsworth, not content with indicating his willingness to purchase the Sibley share, affirmed his readiness to consider going further and purchasing a controlling interest in *The Times*. Harmsworth's proposal, however,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Harmsworth to R. D. Blumenfeld in R.D.B.'s Diary, p. 95 (London, 1930), under date October 16, 1900. Godfrey Walter's letter, declining discussion in the name of his brother, is dated December 13, 1900. Blumenfeld had met Godfrey Walter in connexion with type-composing machinery.

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was brushed aside as, in the circumstances, superfluous. Walter's attitude emerges plainly enough from the letter he later addressed to a correspondent, who reported the currency of rumours that it was contemplated to transfer the paper to Harmsworth—if, in fact, that had not already been done.<sup>1</sup>

Sir,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter, in which you refer to certain "rumours" calculated in your opinion to injure the position of *The Times*.

Such rumours are so absurd in themselves, and so utterly baseless in point of fact, that it might seem unnecessary to pay any attention to them; and hitherto I have acted in accordance with that view.

It may be, however, that the moment has arrived when it is desirable to contradict once for all the idle talk to which you refer, and to state for the benefit of all concerned that there is not, and never has been, one word of truth in it. The control of *The Times* has been in my hands for a good many years past, it is there now, and there it will remain until events over which mortals have no control shall place it in the hands of my successor. Until that happens, you may rest assured that no outside influence of any kind or of any origin will ever be permitted to affect the character of the great institution which was founded by my great-grandfather 120 years ago, which has never for a moment passed from under the control of his lineal successors, and which I, in my turn, have the honour and the responsibility of conducting to-day.

I am, Sir, Yours faithfully,

A. F. WALTER.

In 1902, when the Sibleys took their case into Court, they were alone. On July 14 Mrs. Sibley unexpectedly agreed to assign the remainder of her subdivided share to Godfrev Walter. although inconsistently, as it seemed, Dr. Sibley retained his moiety. The price given for Mrs. Sibley's share, £2,200, was considered a satisfactory one and it later became the basis of much larger transactions. The settlement occupied the last few months of 1902 and upon its conclusion the temper of the proprietors improved, the more so as Dr. Sibley, in his personal behalf, discharged Godfrey Walter from any future claim by him on account of the printing profits which, throughout the action, had been stigmatized as excessive. The year 1903 was a peaceful one for Walter. In 1904, however, a recrudescence of rumour made it necessary to issue another statement. In more than one quarter it was again stated that a sale of the paper to Harmsworth had already taken place. The occasion of this renewal of the story was not the familiar recurrence

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The rumour as it reached the American Press led to a scheme which is described in Chapter XVI.

of lessened dividends but the unexpected emergence of increases for three or four years. Yet *The Times* had not increased its sales, its advertisements, or its earnings. The impossible had happened. Bell had succeeded in paying an increased dividend upon the decreased revenue of *The Times* newspaper. Bell's entire experience of newspaper management was limited to ten years in Printing House Square. By modern standards he was hardly a business man. Nevertheless, he possessed a native fund of shrewdness and financial ability which would have gained little from the expensive apparatus of commercial efficiency customary in present-day offices. Had he spent twenty years in the trade and enjoyed experience in other newspaper offices it is probable that he would have come to no other conviction than that he held in 1890, 1904, and 1907—namely, that it was impossible to make *The Times* pay.

In coming to this conclusion Bell was moved by two facts. First, common experience proved that it was difficult to make the ordinary newspaper pay. Secondly, The Times was neither an ordinary newspaper nor produced in ordinary conditions. It was, therefore, all the more difficult to make the paper pay. Bell certainly would have welcomed changes in the conditions under which the paper was produced. Those conditions made what was difficult impossible, so he thought. But these conditions arose out of the historic constitution of Printing House Square and could only be changed, as he knew, as part of a scheme by which the Walters and the proprietors agreed to reorganize the ownership of the paper, the ownership of the editorial offices and the responsibility for the printing arrangements. Bell, of course, had no power to conduct any negotiations towards this end. He could and did make suggestions to Walter, but, except on one occasion to be noted later, with little confidence of their acceptance. The prospect of agreement between the Walters and the proprietors was too slight to justify reliance upon paper schemes for reorganization. However much he disliked the contemporary economic consequences of these historic rights claimed by both the Walters and the proprietors, Bell had to accept them. In other words, he had to regard as standing charges not only the rent of the offices, the cost of newsprint, to which had to be added the charges (which included the profit taken by the Walters) for composing and printing, but even the dividends. Regarding all these Bell was powerless.

After the litigation began it became plain that only the provision of sufficient dividends could reduce the risk of that final disaster to the constitution—i.e., the sale of the paper to the highest bidder

irrespective of any enforceable undertaking to maintain its character. Bell had to succeed in two equally impossible tasks First, he had to pay an increasing or, at least, a stable dividend upon The Times, while it was regularly losing in circulation and revenue. Secondly, he had to do this without reducing standing charges such as those for rent and printing, which were fixed by the Walters. Thirdly, he had to do this without touching the price of the paper. A reduction in price from threepence to twopence a copy would, in the judgment of both Walter and Bell, involve a drastic cutting down of the home and foreign staff, and hence a fundamental change in the character of The Times which Walter was pledged to maintain "on the old lines" as an independent national and complete newspaper habits of the office and the views of the Chief Proprietor alike refused any such compromise. Bell, who served ten years at home. was, it may be recalled, originally a foreign correspondent. He had come from Egypt to undertake a task, knowing it was difficult: he was not to be tempted to make The Times pay by sacrificing the foreign service or any other department, or quality, whose continuance alone made the task worth the effort.

It has been seen in an earlier Chapter that a journal of character could, if the need arose, make an arrangement with a political party of its choice. Such a solution to a newspaper's difficulties would be accepted as perfectly honourable; indeed it was rare for a metropolitan daily newspaper to pay its way for long periods without some such arrangement and sometimes transfer. The tradition of John Walter II and III—i.e., The Times during the century covered by Barnes and Delaneforbade their successors to conduct it upon party lines. The Chief Proprietor who succeeded John Walter III in 1894 would not have dreamt of changing this, the pure tradition. It had nothing to do with the "small" proprietors. One of the many things they could not do was to interfere if Arthur Walter. whether in return for a subsidy direct from the party chest or indirectly from a party member himself to be rewarded by party honours, turned The Times into a Conservative Party paper after the model of the Standard or the Pall Mall Gazette: or a Liberal paper like the Daily News or the Westminster Gazette. The fourth Walter could choose, as the first had chosen, to make The Times an avowed party organ. That he did not do so was due to the example of his father and grandfather, to the memory of Delane and of Barnes; and to the dictates of his conscience.

Nevertheless, the continued publication of *The Times* as an independent journal, and in its hereditary character, was seen

to depend upon the provision of a subsidy which, within the tradition, needed to be absolutely indifferent and non-committal. Learning from his own experience in Printing House Square, and taking a great risk, Bell determined to create the "subsidy" on the premises. When he first came to Printing House Square he had seen with satisfaction that certain subsidiary publications made a profit. The Times Weekly Edition was a property whose value increased; The Times Law Reports regularly produced a useful profit. Bell had seen from these figures how the mounting losses on The Times increased the importance of the gains made by the subordinate publications. If other such profitable periodicals could be initiated, a way of salvation for The Times might be opened up. Bell determined to try the effect of using the name of the paper as the backing for "The Times Atlas." This was duly published in 1896. It had been modestly successful.

The success of these publishing ventures immediately attracted attention. Two keen American publishers saw in it a chance for the furtherance of a great scheme of their own. In 1897 Messrs. Hooper and Jackson, owners of an American bookselling syndicate incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois, sought an interview with the Manager of The Times. Hooper and Jackson were specialists in a category of publishing hardly known in England: the making of new cheap editions from old plates bought from the original publishers whose editions in expensive "sets" of the complete works by esteemed authors were no longer selling. The new editions were not sold in the normal way through the booksellers, who, in any case, had reported to the original publishers that the work was unsaleable, but direct to the public. The 25 per cent. or 33 per cent. booksellers' discount on an expensive "set" amounted, on an edition of any size, to a large saving. Out of this saving it was possible to finance two distinct operations, first the cost of an advertising campaign, and secondly the cost and risk of a scheme of selling by instalments. By these means an entirely new market for the old book was secured in America. The rewards in this kind of enterprise were great in that country and Messrs. Hooper and Jackson had achieved many successes there. The firm's preliminary announcements, advertisements, pictorial follow-up booklets posted to those who had filled in the inquiry (" send no money") were well known in America as the best in the trade.

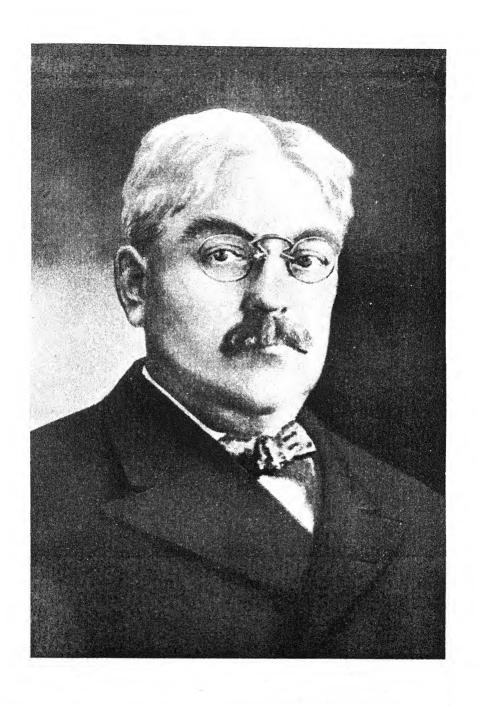
The scheme they proposed in 1898 to *The Times* was to market a reprint from the plates of the ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* which had been commissioned by Messrs. A. and C. Black in 1875 and completed by them in 1888. Since then it

# THE TIMES IN ADVERSITY AND LITIGATION

had been reprinted by them and sold at cash prices through the booksellers. Thus there had been three editions, in 1888, 1894 and 1896. Now Messrs. Hooper and Jackson proposed a cheaper issue to be sold in Britain as well as in America. It was to be sold as "The Times edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica" and it was to be sold direct to the British public upon the instalment plan. Hooper and Jackson assured Bell that they would reach a new public which desired to possess a set of the Encyclopaedia. When Bell answered that the edition was out of date and that anybody who wanted it already possessed it, the Americans replied that there existed a public which could not afford to pay cash for it and were not able to persuade a bookseller to give them the necessary credit. Such a public, in Bell's view, did not want an encyclopaedia at any price, however low. Hooper and Jackson's confident reply was that they would create a public that would want it.

Accordingly, Hooper and Jackson endeavoured to persuade first Bell, and through him, Walter to sponsor the ninth edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica as cheaply reprinted from the old plates with, of course, the instalment method of selling it. Hooper and Jackson offered The Times a powerful inducement. They were ready to take, and pay cash for, a due amount of the advertising space in The Times in return for the use of the name of the paper and also pay the paper one guinea for each subscriber so secured. Thus The Times incurred no cash risk in the venture; indeed, as Messrs. Hooper and Jackson were willing to pay for a minimum of 100 columns of the advertising space in The Times at the standard rate, the paper must gain even if very few copies were sold. To the Manager the chance of thus making money without risk was too good to be missed. To the Chief Proprietor the opportunity of quieting the dissentient Proprietary by distributing a possibly larger dividend was a relief. Thus The Times joined in the undertaking of selling the ninth edition of the Encyclopaedia on what Messrs. Hooper and Jackson described as "The Times System of Easy Payments." It was later agreed, in order to silence the criticism that the whole "set" was out of date, that the issue be followed by the publication of new supplementary volumes to be edited by Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace at the entire expense of Hooper and Jackson.<sup>1</sup> For this work rooms in P.H.S. were to be let to them on terms highly advantageous to The Times; the editorial address was used for Encyclopaedia correspondence.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Consisting of ten volumes, completed in 1902-1903, constituting, in combination with the earlier set, the tenth edition. Wallace had the assistance of Arthur Hadley, President of Yale, and Hugh Chisholm.



HORACE EVERETT HOOPER

## THE TIMES EDITION OF THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA

As Americans—they were New Englanders—Horace Everett Hooper and William Montgomery Jackson were most sympathetic to The Times. As men they were extremely agreeable. possessed of a fund of amusing stories: as publishers they were alert, resourceful, experienced and confident; as suitors for the imprimatur of Printing House Square they were reverential. Altogether, as business men "the two Americans," were more than a match for Printing House Square. In fact they were revolutionaries to whom the publishing trade of the present day, despite "the Book War," owes an immense debt. Hooper was the leading spirit in an enterprise the object of which was to provide more books for more people at a lower price than had vet been known. The degree of commercial success which rewarded the enterprise of Hooper and Jackson personally is not known. It must have been very great if the increased profit of The Times Sundry Publications Account is considered. The figures prove that Bell's bargain, in the then circumstances of the paper, amounted to nothing less than salvation.

In the year 1896, twelve months before Hooper first came to see Bell, The Times had made a profit on the Atlas of £1,846 8s. 3d. In 1897, the year of the negotiations, the Atlas made £757 1s. 5d. In 1898 the Encyclopaedia brought in £11,830. This was the first year, and naturally the best, of the working of the agreement covering the ninth edition; but 1899 realized £9,594 15s. 0d. The success, quickly apparent, of the first year was, however, so encouraging that both parties to this agreement determined upon an extension of operations. They forthwith laid down plans for the Century Dictionary and The Times Gazetteer. In 1899 these publications together brought no less a profit than £7,556 3s. 6d. in addition to that from the Encyclopaedia Britannica. In 1900 the profit for the bookpublishing schemes, including another new venture (Fifty Years of Punch), totalled £22,449 7s. 1d. Thus between 1896 and 1900 the year's profit of the book-publishing section of the Sundry Publications Department had jumped from £1,846 8s. 3d. to £22,448 7s. 1d. For the same years the figures of The Times itself had moved from a profit of £29,955 19s. 4d. to a loss of £18,498 14s. 24d. In 1899 the figures had been better. The Times had made a profit of £8,735 16s. 6dd. and the publications £18,592 1s. 3d. The total amount available that year for dividend was £33,971 ls. 8d. this sum, £7,971 1s. 8d. was put to reserve and the rest. £26,000—namely, £4,000 more than the previous year—was distributed to the proprietors.

The increase, however, produced upon the minds of certain proprietors the opposite of the effect hoped for. The satisfaction even of the least suspicious was mitigated by a belief that the profits were due not to the recovery of the paper itself but to the sale of what they later described as "alien" publications. They became genuinely afraid of the results of Walter's reliance upon the revenue from the sale of books, and the charge was soon heard that the Walters were using Hooper and Jackson as a guarantee of their own unduly large profits from printing The Times. The opposition however did not promise legal action and was ignored. Certainly Bell had every reason to be satisfied with his new department. By 1905 it produced an aggregate of £151,660 profit which The Times would never otherwise have had at its disposal. The eventual saturation of a market which even Hooper and Jackson's advertising could not expand to infinity was of course foreseen. For this contingency two new ideas had been held in reserve.

The first was a fresh edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica to be edited at P.H.S. The sale of the ninth edition of the Encyclonaedia ceased by 1904. It was a source of revenue which could not recur for six years while the new edition was being completed, and then only by the continuance of the contract with Hooper and Jackson, the proprietors of the copyright. These were the circumstances which Bell foresaw and which justified Walter in signing on May 18, 1904, a new agreement by which The Times secured a continuance of the services of Hooper and Jackson. Walter now became an equal partner with them in any net extra revenue (not profit) which, with their help, the office might succeed in obtaining, from increased advertising and circulation, over and above the £200,000 (£89,000 sales; £111,000 advertisements) revenue which The Times itself earned in the year 1903. All expenses incurred in securing that extra revenue were to be deducted before it was considered as earned: and the revenue of £200,000 belonged, in any case, to The Times, while any deficit below that revenue was to be equally divided between The Times and them. Finally there also remained intact to The Times all revenue from other sources.

This arrangement was operative from July 1, 1904, to June 30, 1905. It was then renewed with a modification. The *Weekly Edition*, which had a revenue of £17,000, was included in the agreement and the figure of £200,000 was thus raised to £217,000.

The advantages to Walter of this agreement were that:

(1) He secured the continuation of the Encyclopaedia agreement for another edition. Without any financial risk The Times

#### FOUNDATION OF THE TIMES BOOK CLUB

had already made over £108,000 by this single publication. Any decrease in the goodwill of the name of *The Times* through its connexion with what the dissenting proprietors described as "alien" books and methods was ignored. It was not thought unreasonable to hope for another £100,000 from a new edition of the *Encyclopaedia* to be ready by 1910.

- (2) The services of Messrs. Hooper and Jackson as advertising consultants, which were gratuitous.
- (3) If, despite their efforts to arrest it, the fall continued, *The Times* had only to pay one-half of that fall—the other half being borne by Hooper and Jackson.
- (4) If, on the other hand, as a result of Hooper and Jackson's ideas, their enterprise and their capital, the fall was converted into a rise, *The Times* secured half that increase without any extra investment or risk.

The revenue for 1903-1904, it has been seen, was £200,000. The continuous tendency to fall in previous years was at the rate of £9,000 a year. The revenue for 1904-1905 might, therefore, reasonably have been expected to fall to £191,000. Equally, but for the Hooper and Jackson agreement, the revenue for 1905-1906 might reasonably have been expected to fall another £9,000 Actually the revenue for 1905-1906 was to £182,000. £295,539 19s. 3d. Similarly, without the Hooper and Jackson agreement, the revenue of The Times for 1906-1907 might reasonably have been expected to fall to £173,000; but actually it was £285,258 5s. 3d. The figures prove not only that the Hooper and Jackson agreement covering the forthcoming new tenth edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica was a valuable asset but that the new advertising and circulation schemes by which The Times and Hooper and Jackson provided against the cessation of profits on the old ninth edition were justified.

The two Americans proposed, besides, the establishment of an office of *The Times* in the West End, at which advertisements would be taken, theatre tickets ordered and books sold. It was suggested that subscribers to *The Times* be given privileges nobody else could secure from any other publisher, bookseller, or library. The essence of all Hooper and Jackson's schemes was to establish direct contact with the purchaser. This was a scheme reserved to subscribers to the paper and for their sole benefit. The new plan suited Bell because he saw that it was to the interest of the Americans to increase the membership as much, and as quickly, as possible; and, secondly, by limiting the scheme to readers

of the paper the Americans took a direct interest in increasing the registered sales of the paper. It was not an easy matter to raise the circulation of *The Times* as long as it cost threepence—and it could certainly not then be produced and sold for less. Notwithstanding, Hooper and Jackson, and Bell, worked out a compromise to test the public response to a change of price.

In the summer of 1904 a subscription system was inaugurated by which a "discount subscriber" (that was the designation) could apply for "registration" as a reader of The Times if he forwarded his name to Printing House Square with a remittance for £3. By doing so the paper got the money in advance and the subscriber saved eighteen shillings, or 23 per cent., upon a year's daily purchases. The arrangement extended to those who preferred to pay in quarterly instalments. Both classes of subscribers were invited to register on or before June 29, 1904, in order to benefit as from the following July 4. The response was satisfactory. Hooper and Jackson and The Times, in partnership, proceeded to the foundation of the new library. In September of the following year there was opened at a fine suite of rooms in New Bond Street "The Times Book Club." Subscribers to the paper were offered membership without charge if they registered their names. They received at their choice three volumes at a time, to be exchanged as often as desired at the Club rooms; also the volumes were delivered and collected from any address in the London postal area once a week without charge. The subscriber-member was also entitled to purchase, at a discount, any book he was reading and desired to keep; and, in the case of an expensive book or an aggregate purchase of inexpensive books of not less than £5 in value, he could take advantage of what was called "The Times system" and make monthly payments to cover the purchase. It was pointed out that as subscribers to The Times, thus enabled without charge to keep abreast of contemporary English and foreign literature, were being placed in a very advantageous position, the management reserved the right to limit the number of these subscribers. The scheme was, in fact, not free from difficulties. In order to render it practicable Bell had to make special arrangements regarding the delivery of the paper with W. H. Smith and Son, whom he could not afford to antagonize. The foremost trade interest was thus adjusted but there were others in the background.

The means taken by Hooper and Jackson to lower the cost to subscribers who desired to purchase new books departed, obviously, from the usages of the English book trade. The Americans, accustomed to the more elastic mechanism of the

trade in their own democratic country, and habituated to their own consistent plan of making the most direct contact with the actual book-buyer, thus enabling him to buy more books, never appreciated the determination of the English publishing trade to preserve the existing bookselling organization and the discount it lived on. To Hooper and Jackson the English discount system was a mere device to raise the price of books. They converted Bell to this point of view. But, seeing the success of the Club and consequently the danger to the framework of the whole bookselling trade, the threatened interests protested. Bell informed them that books were too expensive and that as he saw no evil in making them cheap he saw no reason to revise the Club's terms. The publishers being, as he said, in a "ring" to keep up the price of books, Bell naturally concluded that any threat not to supply the Club with new books was an abuse of power. Times ought to resist the publishers' "ring." It did so and the paper and the Club were committed to a public fight with the Publishers' Association. Many of the publishers and booksellers bore the most honoured names in the trade and were advertising clients of the paper. Inevitably all publishers' advertisements were withdrawn. This was a serious matter. The controversy, known as the "Book War," was carried into the columns of rival newspapers, and although The Times was by no means unsupported, it was clear enough that its older readers heartily disliked "schemes," "discount-subscriptions," "easy payments," "book clubs" and any other kind of "special offer." It was not certain that Bell and Hooper could beat the publishers. But there was a still more serious matter brewing: a group of proprietors had been discussing among themselves methods to end such an unedifying method of selling The Times.

The expostulations of some proprietors remained entirely without effect. In these circumstances a writ on behalf of Sibley and several other proprietors was issued against Walter on September 12, 1905. The plaintiffs asked leave to acquire an account of the assets, debts and liabilities, the manner of dividing the profits; a declaration that the property be transferred to a limited liability company and that the necessary directions be given to this effect. Finally it was asked that the Court direct that Walter was not entitled to employ the assets for the establishment of a book club, or the maintenance of any library. On the day of the issue of the writ Dr. Sibley sent a printed circular to all the individual proprietors advising them of the action now being taken. The object, he wrote, was "not to injure the undertaking but to improve it and put it upon a firm basis." The Book Club

need not necessarily be closed but the liability of the proprietors for it must be limited. The solicitors to certain proprietors stated that the intention was to have the partnership converted into a limited liability company. The solicitors hoped that the action would be looked upon as a friendly one and that any contest or publicity would be avoided. In the light, however, of Walter's assurance that a measure for submission to the House of Commons was being drafted, the action was vain. On August 20 Mr. F. H. L. Errington had already furnished his draft for a Bill to Regulate the Rights and Liabilities of the Proprietors of The Times, and Walter, as formerly in 1897, was again advised that the attitude of the Irish Party gave the Bill little chance. But the final paragraph of Dr. Sibley's circular indicated pretty plainly the temper in which the issue of the writ had been decided upon. It informed the recipients that "we hope on this occasion that any childish threats on the part of the Management to silence our just claims will be treated with the contempt they deserve."

Walter, characteristically, was not at first inclined to take seriously either the threatened action or the circular. He was encouraged in this attitude by Soames. Consequently, once again, no steps were taken. The delays of the law also encouraged Walter to do nothing. But it became clear in the following year that the plaintiffs meant business. Realizing, therefore, that if the case did come into Court, the publicity must harm the paper. Walter wrote to all the proprietors, including Dr. Sibley and the other plaintiffs, asking them to attend a meeting in his room at Printing House Square. Most of those who attended had never been there before, and were unknown either to Walter or to one another. The atmosphere was correct, if not cordial, and the tone of the speeches was complimentary to Walter personally. There was criticism of the "alien" book schemes of Messrs. Hooper and Jackson. It was agreed that there should be an inquiry (1) into the interests of the proprietors or partners; (2) into the assets and liabilities of the business; (3) into the accounts for the years from 1900 to 1906. A resolution was put to the meeting, and carried unanimously, that the pending action be regarded as a friendly one, for the purpose of forming the partnership into a private company with limited liability—the details to be worked out between the plaintiffs and Walter. A member of the firm of accountants proposed by Mrs. Sibley in 1898 was asked to draft the articles of association. The terms of this resolution were submitted to the absent proprietors by letter, and a large majority of them signified their assent, while the rest were non-committal. The result was considered highly satisfactory; the pending

#### THE TIMES AT THE END OF ITS RESOURCES

action was withdrawn; the Court, by consent on December 5, 1906, directed a draft of the articles of association to be prepared. It was a mere matter for the draughtsmen. The worst, it was thought, was over.

The date of the meeting called by Walter at Printing House Square was November 12, 1906. One month before, Walter had signed a new agreement with Hooper and Jackson concerned with advertising. It was a renewal, or rather, an expansion, of previous agreements by which revenue was to be produced for The Times during the interval in which the tenth edition of the Encyclopaedia was being written, edited and printed. Walter was perfectly entitled to sign this agreement. The proprietors had not then even put forward a claim to prior notice or consultation on any particular matter affecting the management. Nevertheless, in the circumstances, the putting of the agreement into effect could hardly fail to re-awaken their suspicions. Peace, it was certain, depended upon a cessation of publicity about the paper. But the effect of the new contract was to stimulate public controversy. The new arrangement was that Hooper should become the manager of the advertising department, with full powers to engage and discharge, and absolute liberty to develop the display advertising. The agreement guaranteed to The Times the maintenance of the existing net revenue from advertising and one-half of any net increase over that figure. Seeing that there was no risk and every prospect of considerable gain, Walter signed this agreement in October, 1906. And it was absolutely necessary that he should sign, for, in the previous month, Bell had asked for the sale of the securities comprising the small reserve fund and for the money to be used as liquid capital—which was a thing The Times had never possessed and never could possess as long as all its profits were distributed as dividends to the proprietors. The whole sum was a mere £50,000, but it was Bell's only and last resort. The considerable sum owing by advertisers to the paper was necessarily out of reach for some time; it amounted to £28,237. Newsprint on order and payments due brought the sum required for working capital up to £35,000. There was £15,000 left out of the realisation of the reserve. The moiety of the expenses for promoting the Book Club now due to Hooper had not been paid; they amounted to £21,114, but he was willing to wait Bell's convenience. The Club itself had so far done well and the circulation was rising; apart from its share of promotion expenses, only some £3,645 of the money of The Times was locked up in it. But Bell had to have the money for the newsprint and he had to wait for his advertisers to pay. The securities were accordingly sold in September and the new advertising agreement with Hooper was signed in October.

The new system, it was appreciated, would amount to an internal revolution, a silent one, in the advertising department. What was not foreseen was the effect upon readers of a sudden transformation of the hitherto uniformly quiet pages of The Times into vociferous displays. The new advertisements, to-day accepted as a matter of course, shocked beyond measure the paper's then readers. Walter was inundated with reproaches from all quarters: he was forsaking the traditions of his ancestors; he had sold the century or more's reputation of The Times for a hoped-for immediate gain of filthy lucre; he had imported American methods into British journalism, &c., &c. The Chief Proprietor's annovance at these criticisms of the advertisement department and of his own management was not decreased by the reflection that they had some justification. Notwithstanding, the realisation that the financial needs of The Times were more urgent than the complainants could possibly know again determined his choice and his action.

Walter had himself seen that the Hooper and Jackson direction of the advertisement department was calculated to increase the revenue; he had agreed with their policy after due consideration and discussion with Bell; finally he had signed the agreement. Under heavy criticism he defended it to the public and to the proprietors. The agreement did in fact produce an increase of revenue and Walter knew that, in the circumstances of its management and manufacture, The Times must cease publication if, on the one hand, it was not allowed to receive revenue from encyclopaedias and dictionaries, and, on the other, was forbidden to seek for advertising revenue by the only effective means. The public were not so difficult to deal with. Shrilly as complaining readers voiced their protests they grew accustomed to the new displays and the subscriptions of many old readers were retained by Jackson, who, in charge of the subscription department, wrote soothing letters. In a short time, it was reasonable to hope, readers would cease their reproaches.

But among the ranks of the proprietors a more difficult situation was developing. When, towards the end of November, it was learnt that the advertisements complained of appeared in virtue of an agreement between the Chief Proprietor and Hooper and Jackson and, above all, that it was signed before their meeting on the twelfth of that month, they manifested the greatest indignation. Moreover, the consent then reached, by which the

proprietors were to prepare articles of association for a limited liability, was endangered by their recent inspection of the draft. Walter's proposal to appoint Dr. Sibley and another dissenting proprietor to the Board of "The Times, Limited," as directors for life, had been accepted; but the draft itself, amended by Walter, maintained him in the historic position given him by his great-grandfather's will. When, therefore, the plaintiffs saw that in the new company he was to have the position of "Governing Director" of "The Times, Limited," and be so styled, they refused to accept the articles. "One of the very objects of this action," the solicitors to one group wrote, "was to do away with Mr. Walter's autocratic powers of management which have been so disastrous to the paper in the past. The articles as altered give Mr. Walter in the proposed Company practically the same powers of absolute management which he has hitherto exercised. This will never be agreed to by our Clients and those supporting them now, the large majority of the Proprietors." The withholding of the information that he had put his signature to a new Hooper and Jackson agreement was represented as a flagrant instance of Walter's autocracy, "which had been so disastrous to the paper in the past," and he was equally blamed for the paper's present condition. The upshot was that more than one section of the proprietors concerned began to nourish feelings of personal animosity against Walter and against those of their own body who respected his judgment. Walter could do no right. The temper of this set of dissenting proprietors thus made it impossible for Walter to justify, to them, all the agreements with Hooper and Jackson that he had signed, by citing the demonstrable fact that they were profitable. The objection of this set was to Hooper and all his profits as well as to Walter and all his autocracy. Some of them carried their prejudice farther and ruled out Bell as a desirable member of the management. Moreover, those less bigoted proprietors who had held earlier that the agreements concerning the Book Club, especially those requiring separate premises for it in Bond Street, should never have been signed, were joined by another and stronger set estranged by the new advertising. All were growing progressively anti-Walter.

It was not easy for him to prove that the Club was likely to be a permanent success. The rooms had been opened for business on September 11, 1905, and the figures showed that a total capital expenditure of £124,665 9s. 8d. had been laid out by Hooper and Jackson. Irrespective of the dispute with the publishers, at its height in November, 1906, the Club, as Bell naturally foresaw from the beginning, could not arrive at the profit-making stage

after only 18 months' working at the end of 1906. There was a risk, but Hooper and Jackson's schemes from 1898 to 1906 had alone brought into P.H.S. the money that enabled *The Times* to continue publication in the circumstances of its ownership and production. It was certain that no mere paper reconstruction, even under the direction of the Court, would have enabled the publication to continue. No matter how immediately changes were made in the control, what was wanted was capital. But as the dissentient proprietors saw it, any profits made on the *Encyclopaedia* were to be lost on the Book Club. The profits on the old advertising contract, though good, were not sufficient to offset the risk of the Book Club, and the signature "behind their back" to the new agreement made them, in the circumstances, resolutely intransigent.

There was now, therefore, less hope of peace with the proprietors than six weeks earlier, and the number of the disgruntled was growing. It had been agreed in November, 1906, that the pending action be withdrawn while the articles of association of a limited company to be entitled "The Times, Limited," were being drafted. Now, finding themselves in possession of new grievances. several groups of proprietors agreed upon fresh and prompt action. Although much time was spent in legal correspondence. the solicitors to one group succeeded by June, 1907, in extracting from Soames the text of the advertising agreement of October. 1906. Miss Brodie-Hall, leader of this group, having studied it. expressed the judgment that her cousin, Walter, had, by his action in signing it, "forfeited the last shred of forbearance with him on the part of the proprietors and of all indeed who know about it-and the rest will know in time." Miss Brodie-Hall was a formidable antagonist, related, not only to Arthur and Godfrey Walter, but to a large number of other proprietors. Her interest in the accounts of The Times was deep-seated. As early as 1890 she had urged upon Walter and his father the need for changes. She had an amateur's taste for business and went frequently into the City to consult with investment bankers, among whom she counted several personal friends. In 1894 Miss Brodie-Hall had recommended to Walter one of her friends, "a millionaire," and a member of the Wiener Bank Verein, as a source of new capital. Her first step, in association with Dr. Sibley, the original plaintiff in the abandoned action, was to send out (June 19, 1907) a circular inviting their co-proprietors to join them in asking the Court to set aside the latest Hooper and Jackson agreement. Upon hearing of this, Walter summoned another meeting of the proprietors at Printing House Square. He once again explained to them the elementary advantages of the agreement. Bell, as Assistant Manager, supported him with a more detailed account of cash benefits conferred upon the paper's accounts. Some of the proprietors who had hitherto trusted Walter's judgment expressed themselves as satisfied with the explanations given them. Neither Dr. Sibley and party, nor Miss Brodie-Hall and party, were among them and the meeting accomplished little more than the subdivision of the proprietors into three cliques following Walter, Sibley and Miss Brodie-Hall respectively.

In the meantime, discussions of an immediately practical order were taking place elsewhere. From the early summer Hooper had been talking over privately with Bell a grandiose reconstruction scheme, nothing less than the combination of all the properties and activities of Printing House Square into one corporation. The Times, The Times Book Club, the Walters' printing business, the Encyclopaedia Britannica and the bookselling firm of Hooper and Jackson were all to be amalgamated into one business. The proposal had come from Hooper. The idea had occurred to him in 1900, years before, when rumours had reached New York, and been printed in the Tribune, that Walter had sold his interest in The Times to Harmsworth. "If Mr. Walter wants to sell," Hooper then wrote to Bell, "why can't we buy The Times?" The rumour, it has been seen, was successfully scotched by Walter in 1902, but Hooper's imagination had been too much excited to permit him to abandon interest in the possibilities the situation might still hold for him. The scheme that Hooper put before Bell in the summer of 1907 was not hastily contrived; it was the fruit of much careful thinking on Hooper's part. Bell gave the scheme detailed examination in June, and again in July. He then thought so well of it that he asked Walter to examine it. Writing on July 25 from 22 Park Crescent, Bell reminded Walter of the serious situation of the paper. "We cannot do more for two years than balance receipts and expenditure," he pointed out, and proceeded to describe "our one chance of escape." He urged that "we should start with Hooper and Jackson a scheme for floating a company of two millions, which scheme should be submitted to shareholders as one in which they could take shares in exchange for the present holding." Bell then suggested the price of "about £400,000 for The Times"; it was a figure of which more was heard later in other negotiations. If such a company were started, and providing Walter had a controlling interest, Bell said he, personally, would take any share "that you would let me buy up to the extent of my means."

In propounding such a scheme, Bell of course took into account the figures of The Times for many years; he assessed the value on the basis of his experience of The Times book-selling department and his knowledge of the private book business of Hooper and Jackson; but, in addition, he had to consider the domestic situation as between Walter and the proprietors. The salvation of The Times by any scheme depended upon its acceptability to the proprietors as well as to Walter himself. The opposition of many of the proprietors derived much of its tenacity from their uncertainty that the character of The Times was safe in the hands of a Chief Proprietor who had committed himself so deeply to what they regarded as the "alien" publications initiated by Bell, with Hooper at his back. It may be doubted whether Bell appreciated Walter's difficulties in putting before the parties represented by Dr. Sibley and Miss Brodie-Hall a scheme for a single merger of The Times and the Book Club with the Encyclopaedia Company owned by Hooper and Jackson, and both these businesses with the printing business owned by Arthur and Godfrey Walter. The plan bristled with controversial points. The rent which the Walters charged The Times for the use of the premises in Printing House Square and Queen Victoria Street, and the profits they had been making in the printing of the paper and its subsidiary publications, were only two of many other points which were bound to be hotly debated.

Bell, nevertheless, pressed for the scheme to be considered. During July and August, 1907, Walter received many schedules of figures, memoranda explaining the schedules, letters explaining the memoranda, and notes supplementing the letters, worked out by Bell. It was, in form, a good scheme, since it provided for the supply of new money, retained for the paper valuable contracts and secured the advantage of Hooper and Jackson's proved managerial and profit-making capacities. Implicit in it, of course, was Bell's definite acceptance of the truth, as it appeared to him to be, that The Times by itself could not possibly be made to pay. If Newnes with his wealth had failed with his Daily Courier; Pearson with all his energy was making no profit on his Daily Express and, as everybody said, was losing on the Standard, the trade must be a difficult one, to say the least. Bell had long taken his stand with Greenwood, Morley, Stead, Cook and others of experience. It was impossible to make a good paper pay. The Times ought to be endowed.

But there remained Harmsworth. He, indeed, was doing handsomely enough out of his *Evening News* and *Daily Mail*, but nobody would suggest that Harmsworth's methods were

a fit example for the conduct and management of *The Times*. Hence, an experience extending over seventeen years had brought Bell to a conviction that was irreversible; *The Times*, in its historic character, could never be made to pay by anybody; and Walter had been driven to the same conclusion. It was by no means clear how long it could continue publication without a reconstruction scheme which, in all probability, would affect its character. Hooper and Bell said two years. It was one of the merits of their scheme that it promised to leave untouched the paper itself. A second merit was its plan to put the scheme into operation at once.

Nevertheless, despite the merits of the scheme and the urgency of the situation, Walter hesitated to accept or reject it. He hesitated to accept because he was well aware that the proprietors who most disagreed with him did so on the ground of his association with the schemes of Hooper and Jackson. He hesitated to reject it because he felt acutely the weight of responsibility upon his shoulders. In any case, Walter was occupied during July and August with much legal business. He had been arranging with Soames the drafting of the provisional contract by which he was to act as receiver and trustee for the proposed company and to assign to it the assets and liabilities. The value of the proprietors' holding was to be taken at the figure at which the last transfer of any share in The Times was made. This, it turned out, was Mrs. Sibley's assignment to Godfrey Walter in October, 1902. Naturally, the share had first been offered to Arthur Walter. He had not made what Mrs. Sibley's friends regarded as a satisfactory offer and it was determined to approach Godfrey Walter. He had been willing to pay her as much as £2,200. Walter signed the provisional contract including the valuation of the goodwill of The Times at £206,000 on June 28. The action went forward. On July 18, 1907, Mr. Justice Warrington sanctioned the plan of dissolving the partnership and ordered a sale of the property. Walter was duly appointed receiver.

The sole point of agreement at this time between all parties was that a public sale would be disastrous to the paper's prestige. If a sale by auction of *The Times* was to be avoided it was incumbent upon the receiver to discover means of reconstructing the partnership on lines more satisfactory to all parties than the rejected autocratic articles of association of "*The Times*, Limited." Apart altogether from family feuds and personal jealousies from which certain groups among the proprietors took their origin, the broad line of agreement was that an auction of *The Times* must be avoided; the main point of disagreement was

whether and how far the Hooper and Jackson contracts and their effects, the Book Club and the "Book War," should be maintained. The latter consideration was decisive as far as the Hooper scheme, which Bell was urging, was concerned. It was much more than probable that the mere suggestion of an amalgamation with an American syndicate would destroy all Walter's influence.

It is more than doubtful whether the objectors would have changed their minds had they been able to digest the figures relating to the various schemes. The Chief Proprietor did not, at this point, consider it useful to give them in writing any more information than had been given them orally at the two meetings in Printing House Square. Walter's policy, indeed, was so uninviting that his chief critics retaliated by showing greater interest in the large, some said excessive, printing profits they believed him to be making. They were coming, they said, to the conclusion that the Hooper and Jackson agreements were not really necessitated by the position of The Times at all, but by the determination of Arthur and Godfrey Walter to maintain their printing profits at a high figure without the proprietors being allowed the possibility of checking it. There was, they thought. no end to the number of agreements that Walter might sign to secure these profits whether or not the continuity of the character of The Times was guaranteed. Walter had all these suspicions of the proprietors in mind when considering whether to accept or reject the Bell and Hooper scheme. He did give it consideration and authorized a detailed accounting examination of the whole range of interests comprised under the roof of Printing House Square. The examination was asked for by Hooper. It was conducted by Messrs. Deloitte, Plender, Griffiths and Co., and when they attended it was the first occasion that a firm of professional accountants had ever been invited to P.H.S. by the Chief Proprietor. The firm was given every opportunity to make a thorough investigation and Mr. (later Lord) Plender himself, assisted by his then partner, Mr. Chevalier, conducted the audit.

The step, though significant, was not decisive. Walter certainly realized that the profits which the Americans had made for *The Times* had been so vitally useful that the paper might otherwise have ceased publication; and he saw also that in the autumn of 1907, while all sorts of people were ready with reconstruction schemes, nobody was prepared with any alternative for refinancing *The Times*. He, nevertheless, became convinced that the proprietors would refuse to accept it. It was a pity. Walter, Bell and Hooper were agreed, to quote Bell, that "*The Times* conducted on the lines we all wish it to be conducted upon is

#### WALTER DECIDES AGAINST THE AMERICANS

not and cannot itself be a money-making concern"; and Walter saw, also, with pleasure that Hooper was so uninterested in *The Times* as assuredly to be no menace to its historic character.

Unfortunately, however, for the scheme, for Walter's peace and for the tranquillity of the proprietors, Hooper was obviously concerned, in his own words, to "win the fight between the Publishers' Association and The Times." It was difficult for Walter to close his eyes to the fact that the Bell-Hooper scheme carried with it the real danger to the paper's prestige of a long war with the Publishers. Thus there was one objection to the scheme which, it was certain, even the most docile proprietors were absolutely certain to urge. Walter was, however, so slow to make up his mind that in October, 1907, Hooper insisted upon a time limit: "We have been talking with you almost three months now, and have not, so far as we can see, advanced a step." Thus admonished, Walter within ten days decided against the scheme. Hooper was not only disappointed; he was upset at Plender's figures, which, he claimed, were by no means just to his personal business. Bell, who naturally had been supporting Hooper throughout the negotiations, was not directly informed by Walter of his decision. When he learnt of it through Hooper he wrote telling Walter of his deep disappointment—meaning first that Walter might have taken the trouble to communicate his rejection to him direct instead of leaving him to be informed by Hooper. Bell did not trouble to tell him that his feelings also were deeply hurt at the rejection of a scheme which he believed provided justly for Walter's as well as the proprietors' rights and for the maintenance of the paper's independence. He felt, in fact, bitter and mortified, for he believed that he could manage Hooper. Now he did not know what would happen. He wrote to remind Walter that The Times owed the bank £5,600 and that a large sum, £21,600, being the half share of the promotion expenses of the Book Club, was due for immediate payment. Incidentally, the rejection of Hooper's scheme meant that he would not care to wait for his money and that Bell would not care to persuade him.

Bell now needed to think again and Walter had to act. Neither took anybody in the office into his confidence. The Chief Proprietor and the Manager discussed between themselves a purely business matter which, if mentioned to the Editor, could only embarrass him without benefiting them. As Bell decided to maintain silence towards Buckle on the subject, he did not feel free to discuss it with Chirol. In any case the foreign situation between 1905 and 1907 was such as to demand all Chirol's time.

# XV

## ACCORD WITH RUSSIA

FTER the Delcassé incident, and before the Morocco meeting, a firmer attitude in France was hoped for in London. The Germans had hinted strongly enough at an intention to humiliate France before Algeciras and thus succeed in breaking her spirit when the Conference got to business. The Berliner Tageblatt, for instance, had written, according to The Times correspondent in Paris, where the statement had been carefully noted, that "Republican France will have to show at Algeciras whether she is disposed under the direction of M. Rouvier to continue pulling the chestnuts out of the fire on the Continent on behalf of England. It will be seen at the Conference whether it is true that France is in agreement with England to prevent Germany from defending her own interests and to exclude precisely those affairs which concern her." The prominence given in The Times to German affairs was meticulously noted in Germany.

Soon after Christmas, 1905, Alfred Beit visited the Kaiser. He had got together a collection of pictures and had them described in great detail in a catalogue compiled by Professor Wilhelm Bode. It was a copy of this catalogue that he had brought with him and prayed the Kaiser to accept. King Edward's pleasure in Beit's society was so well known that the Kaiser was pleased to invite Beit to make the presentation personally. It took place at the Neues Palais on December 29. After the presentation, the conversation between the Kaiser and Beit took a political turn. Anglo-German relations were discussed. The Kaiser went back to his favourite topic that the real cause of all the trouble between the two countries was the Press; he meant the British Press, above all, *The Times*. It was an idea he had been spreading about so constantly that it had secured wide acceptance in official ranks which did not know its motive.<sup>2</sup> But

Lavino's dispatch, December 5, 1905.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> E. Moitke, Briefe, August 31, 1905: "When one scans the English newspapers one is horrified at the systematic hostility to Germany."

#### THE KAISER ON SAUNDERS

on this occasion the Kaiser amplified the usual complaint by references to an alleged central directorate which he affected to hold responsible. "It is this accursed English system of deliberate, organized agitation—the lies, the calumny, spread by England throughout the Press of every country—by means of which she tries to incite the whole world against us." At this point Beit asked whether he thought the British Government was doing this. "No," replied the Kaiser; "but English capital, in the hands of rich individuals, who in this way do a service to their Government." The Kaiser added that he knew that "the English" had spent 300,000 frs. in a single year on anti-German<sup>1</sup> articles in the Paris Press. "The English" were doing the same thing in Brussels and the Russians were at it in Paris. "There was also," said the Kaiser, "a continual and systematic poisoning of the wells in countless English reviews, where people signed themselves 'Calchas,' 'Diplomaticus,' 'Vates,' &c., served their English readers with the most unheard of and shameless lies about Germany and calumnies against myself." None of this, he said, got contradicted, and therefore it was easily believed.

According to the Kaiser, Beit at once took his side. "If we could only pin them down and find out who these scoundrels are! It has often infuriated me." Beit was astonished when the Kaiser revealed names such as Wesselitzky,2 Toklevski, Tatischeff, and Delcasse's private secretary as the authors of these articles, and said he would see that in London they knew the truth. Beit added that he would tell them that all Berlin asked was that Britain should leave the French free to discover a modus vivendi with Germany. "You leave it to me and I'll see that people get the truth in London," said Beit in parting. "Go for our chief opponents there," replied the Kaiser, "Mr. Moberly Bell and Mr. Harmsworth, whom His Majesty is making a Lord."3 "Ja," Beit is alleged to have said, "und noch einen, who is even worse; and that is Mr. Saunders, The Times correspondent in Berlin. Why, only the other day, he wired to London that he had heard from an unimpeachable source that within two months—i.e., by the end of February—Germany would have declared war on England. That is a fat lie and a good one." In reporting the conversation to Bülow, the Kaiser added, regarding

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose, the Kaiser informed Bülow, of provoking Germany.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Wesselitzky, the London Correspondent of the *Novoye Vremya*, who also wrote as "Argus." (Fay I. 269.) The Germans were wont to ascribe to his pen the articles signed "Calchas" whose identity (= Mr. J. L. Garvin) was never published.

<sup>3</sup> The Kaiser to Bülow. (G.P. XX, p. 695; Bülow, Denkwürdigkeiten II, 183-9.)

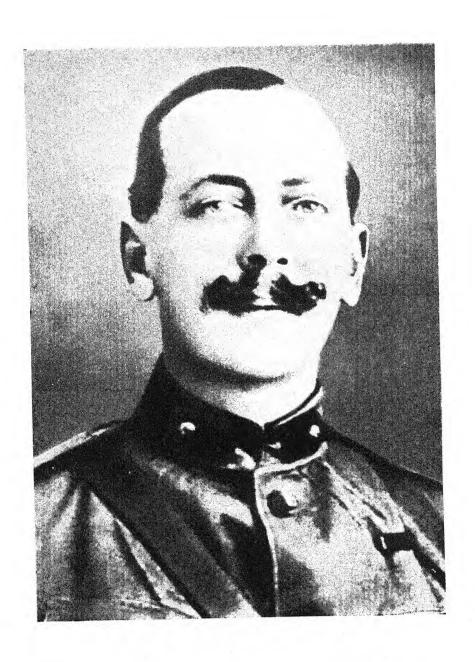
## ACCORD WITH RUSSIA

the Correspondent, "A first-class swine" ("Dass Mr. Saunders ein Erzschweinehund erster Klasse ist ").1

At this time the name of The Times Military Correspondent came into prominence. From the days of Delane The Times numbered on its staff of specialists a writer on military subjects Under Chenery the military writer was Sir George Clarke, later Lord Sydenham, Secretary to the Committee for Imperial Defence which was established in 1903. Sir George Clarke's successor on The Times was Colonel (later Sir) Lonsdale Augustus Hale, R.E., whose appointment dates from 1890. He ceased to write for The Times by 1903. Hale's successor. Colonel Charles à Court, later Repington, had been writing on military subjects since 1884. When he began to work for The Times his reputation was that of one who took strategy, defence. and the related literature, French, German and Italian, with a seriousness uncommon among British soldiers. The Times expected him, if he turned out to be a success, to correspond with greater frequency than his predecessors and thus to stimulate thought concerning the art of war in P.H.S. and in official and political circles. Repington was 46 years of age when he joined the staff of the paper; he had served as D.A.A.G. in the Omdurman campaign and in South Africa, and between the two campaigns, and after being invalided home from the second, he had served as Military Attaché at Brussels and at The Hague. Repington was given his trial employment on The Times as a commentator on the Russo-Japanese War. From the outset his articles were a success. They were headed, in accordance with newspaper practice, as "From Our Military Correspondent."2 No attempt permanently to define his duties was made until the war in the Far East was nearly over. On December 18, 1904, Repington inquired from Bell about the future. He wanted "a sphere of influence or hinterland to exploit. . . . My own preference would be to continue to work for you, to

<sup>2</sup> Hale's work had for some years been headed by this rubric, although few other specialists (dealing with the Navy, agriculture, labour, &c.) were similarly distinguished. The assumption therefore was that Repington was tacitly appointed to succeed Hale; there is no reason to believe that he genuinely objected, as he asserted in his memoirs, to the destruction of "the anonymity which I preferred." (Vestigia, p. 253.) There is reason rather to suppose that he relished the position and influence he gained by being known as "The Times Military Correspondent."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Kaiser kept these names in mind. In annotating a minute of von Tschirschky in Vienna to Bülow, December 16, 1908, which mentions the "Treibereien der englischen Presse," he adds, "Northcliffe, Moberly Bell!" Beit, on January 17, 1906, prevailed upon Lord Esher to visit him and listen to an account of his Potsdam audience. He duly reproduced the Kaiser's complaints and his views regarding Admiral Sir John Fisher, Lord Lansdowne's policy, the Entente Cordiale, Russia, Morocco, &c. Esher's memorandum on this conversation was sent to the King on January 18. (Cf. Esher, Journals II.) For the Kaiser's belief in the usefulness of Beir's intervention, see his marginal remarks regarding Mackenzie Wallace's attitude at Algeciras, mentioned in Bernstorff's dispatch of January 16, 1906, see p. 469, infra.



CHARLES À COURT REPINGTON

#### REPINGTON ON IMPERIAL DEFENCE

be allowed to take up matters connected with the Army, Imperial Defence, and the many subsidiary questions dependent upon those subjects, and to write for you, not to order, but when the spirit moves me." Bell's natural reply was that a "regular appointment" on the basis of writing only "when the spirit moves" had obvious practical objections. The establishment of the Imperial Defence Committee in 1903 and the progress of events made it important to print regular criticism of Army manoeuvres and military developments at home and abroad. "My own idea would be that you should take sole charge of all our Military and Imperial Defence news, but then that implies a certain amount of night work and of occasionally writing to order."2 In January, 1905, Repington assumed responsibility in a manner which suited both The Times and the Correspondent. In thanking Bell, Repington added: "There is much opening for independent criticism to-day. The W.O. is in a state of chaos, Clarke is fairly despondent, Kitchener cantankerous and the Army generally very ill at ease. Old Bobs (XIX Century) shirks all serious issues and talks to children, while Wolseley has taken to poultry farming."3 Repington felt himself to be writing at a time of low ebb. Army reform, although it had come to the front after the South African War, had in fact made little headway, and such as it had, gave no satisfaction to Repington or the keen, young school, determined to renovate the British Army by the provision of a scientific general staff. The correspondent began his work for The Times with the intention to systematize military doctrine and in an unsympathetic atmosphere to drive home his ideas by every possible means. A writer of talent and industry, he had collected an unusual knowledge of the writings of the leading Continental strategists4 which he considered an essential preliminary to effective criticism. Supported by a considerable debating skill, Repington's bookknowledge, as the future would show, was used at times with great polemical effect. The wide audience gradually attracted by his articles enabled The Times to bring into fashion matters of specialist interest which, though vitally concerning the public, had seldom been noticed. It could not be said that even in the

<sup>1</sup> Repington to Bell, December 18, 1904.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bell to Repington, December 19, 1904. (P.H.S. B. 38/705.)

<sup>3</sup> Repington to Bell, January 11, 1905.

<sup>4</sup> The lessons of the Russo-Japanese War emphasized the need of the study of military history which, in Repington's judgment, had already been made obvious by the South African War. But "our system has been to remain ignorant of all the lessons of the past, and then to learn them all over again, with each succeeding war, at huge and unnecessary cost." (See Repington's article "A Plea for History" in *The Times*, September 10, 1904.)

#### ACCORD WITH RUSSIA

office military matters had earlier been considered of great importance. In Repington's view the apathy of the public made his articles all the more necessary and urgent, since he fully admitted that military reform, *i.e.*, reform in a radical sense, amounted to a change in traditional British military doctrine. The case for it could hardly expect an easy passage in official circles.

The new Correspondent's ideas became the more topical and important during the Morocco crisis of 1905 when the French General Staff recognized that they were hardly able to withstand a German attack by land. Repington had spent enough time on the Continent to appreciate the military meaning of land frontiers possessing no natural boundaries. It was obvious to the ex-Military Attaché at Brussels that the defence of Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg and France involved military dispositions of the greatest significance to Britain. The French Government had been acquainted with some of the provisions of the Schlieffen Plan since April, 1904. In the December of that year Major Huguet came to the French Embassy in London as Military Attaché. He arrived with the belief, then axiomatic, of the uselessness from a Continental point of view, of the British Army. But even if the British Army were made effective, in the Continental sense, it did not follow, he continued to think, that it would be used effectively. Repington was an "advanced" theorist but his writings gave no sign that he had approached the conclusion that became so obvious a few years later.

The idea of Continental intervention obviously went counter to British tradition. When the agreement with France was signed in 1904, The Times recognized the existence of a difference in policy between this country and Germany: but not even Saunders considered the possibility of meeting the German Army in the field. The general view in the country was that Britain's period of isolation had by no means come to an end. This was the situation that Repington realized in 1905. After a few months he made a more correct estimate of Britain's situation and her strength to meet all possibilities. He was one of the first to do so. The Russo-Japanese War had forced him to reconsider our commitments, east and west, and hence our prospective military engagements with France. He had expressed in The Times during April, 1905, his conclusion that as England could not hope to defend India with her small professional Army, she was forced to become a "Continental" Power and to possess a Continental army with which to contain Russia. Discussing in The Times of December 22, 1905, the problems of Army Reform which

## REPINGTON'S TALKS WITH THE FRENCH

faced Haldane, the new Minister for War, Repington incidentally made the point that speed of mobilization was not of the practical importance to England it was to France and Germany. That was as far as his thought had progressed in the year after the entente had been established and Morocco had been used by Germany to test its strength. In his writing during 1905 there is no trace of the view that England needed to face the problem of transporting an army across the Channel. But in the early part of the New Year Repington's views appear to have undergone considerable revision.

On December 28 Repington had dinner with Huguet, his friend of some years' standing. They exchanged expressions of anxiety about the situation. The French, it appeared, were worried because Sir Edward Grey, who had just taken over the Foreign Office from Lord Lansdowne, had not renewed the assurances given by his predecessor. Cambon, too, was absent until January 12, 1906, and the Algeciras Conference was due to meet on the 16th. There was no knowing what would happen if, during the Conference, Germany suddenly confronted France with a crisis. Huguet told Repington that the French Navy had taken certain precautions and he was aware, he said, that the British Navy was ready. There remained the possibility that the Germans would attack through Belgium.<sup>1</sup> Repington, having written a memorandum for Sir Edward Grey, saw Lord Esher, whom he asked to communicate with the Secretary of the Defence Committee, and in the afternoon he visited Sir John Fisher, First Sea Lord. The important point that Huguet made to Repington was that in the event of war between France and Germany England's essential task was to come to the aid of the French with all speed and with as large a Continental force as possible. This followed from the acceptance by the French General Staff that Russia could not mobilize in time and that France could not alone resist Germany effectively. Contrary to the view of some of his countrymen, Huguet now held that it would be possible for Britain to furnish military aid that was worth having.

The agreement of Huguet and Repington represented a fundamental departure from the views of even such well-informed men as Bell and Chirol. It is not certain that before meeting Huguet on December 28 Repington himself saw with clearness the essentials of the Franco-German military situation. But after the

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Repington's *The First World War* I, 1-3. Repington reported this conversation to Sir Edward Grey on December 29.

#### ACCORD WITH RUSSIA

Huguet dinner Repington became the first to expound in the Press the revolutionary, or at least untraditional, doctrine that it would be necessary for Britain to dispatch to the Western Front an expeditionary force to be deployed with the French armies. He was also prepared to agitate privately to the same end. The conversations he had had, and those he planned with others were revealed to Buckle and to high political personages only. The memorandum to the Foreign Secretary, which he wrote after seeing Huguet, drew more than a mere acknowledgment Sir Edward Grev's reply was that he was interested in Repington's conversation. "I can only say that I have not receded from anything which Lord Lansdowne said to the French, and have no hesitation in affirming it." Simultaneously, Repington received a letter from Sir George Clarke. He disapproved of any idea of the British Army joining the French Army or the Belgian Army—unless Germany invaded Belgium.

On January 5, 1906, Repington had another talk with Huguet. The Attaché now gave it as his opinion that while France would not violate Belgium, she did not realize, because she had had no lead, that German violation would automatically bring Britain into the field. Upon this, Repington again conferred with Lord Esher and Sir George Clarke. It was agreed that Repington should sound the French by means of a questionnaire submitted through Huguet.<sup>2</sup> It was forwarded by the Prime Minister, M. Rouvier, and the Minister of War, M. Etienne, to the Minister of Marine, M. Thomson, and his staff; also to Generals Brun and Brugère. Huguet returned with the answers on the evening of January 11. Repington discussed them with the Defence Committee on the following day, the French having stated that the most efficacious assistance Britain could render would be to send one or two divisions to debark about the fifth or sixth day. Sir George Clarke agreed to talk to Admiral Sir John Fisher regarding the naval plans for cooperation.<sup>3</sup> On the 13th Sir George Clarke reported that Fisher was not prepared to disclose naval plans, that he did not guarantee the passage of an army across the Channel and was, in fact, opposed to the employment of British troops on the other side of the Channel. It appeared that Sir John French was in agreement with Fisher. Nevertheless, the Defence Committee thought it advisable to discuss matters further with the French. The new Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, agreed, provided neither

<sup>1</sup> Grey to Repington, January 1, 1906. (Repington, op. cit. I, 4.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The document, dated January 5, 1906, consisting of eleven questions, is printed at pp. 6-10 of Repington's *The First World War*.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Repington and Fisher were not on friendly terms. Cf. Lord Esher's Journal (January 14, 1904) "Clarke and Repington . . . are furious with Jackie."

Government was committed, and on January 17 Huguet informed Repington that Sir James Grierson had opened relations with him. The policy of "conversations" thus accepted, was one of the first acts of a new Government.

On December 5, Campbell-Bannerman had become Prime Minister, with Haldane as Secretary for War and Edward Grey as Foreign Secretary; in addition there were Morley, Bryce, Crewe, Birrell, Loreburn, and Lloyd George. The first thing was a General Election. Simultaneously, the concern in responsible circles at what was felt to be a general deterioration in Anglo-German relations secured expression in a letter to the Editor of The Times, signed by a number of Germany's most eminent professors of science and art. The letter regretted the form in which the feelings of some towards the South African War had been framed, protested at the suggestion that Germany entertained any ill-feelings against England and insisted that certain sinister designs against England imputed to their country had no foundation. German naval policy, said the signatories, "is understood and manifestly seen to be directed solely to providing what the Government consider adequate protection for the growing mass of German shipping, and certainly not at entering wantonly on any contest at sea." It was necessary for the sake of peace to dispel the fog and prejudice largely "created by what we feel to be misrepresentations of German aims in the utterances of Englishmen" and, they pointedly added, "journals of high standing." Ten days or so later. British men eminent in science and art, expressed their gratification at the German pronouncement. They agreed that a war between the two Powers would be a world calamity for which no victory could compensate either nation; and, they proceeded, "we emphatically declare our belief that the levity with which certain journalists occasionally discuss such a possibility is the measure of their profound ignorance of the real sentiments of the nation." The possibility of war continued, nevertheless, to occupy the thoughts of journalists, and not least those attached to the staff of one newspaper of "high standing." The Times while not opposing "good-will" missions and manifestos of German societies and individuals, watched carefully the direction of Government policy. At this time, the paper encountered not a little criticism for the tone employed by its Naval Correspondent. "The Times has been surrendered into the hands of Fisher," reported Chirol.1 The author of the articles was Thursfield.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> To Bell. As often the case with Chirol a criticism of the Editor was implied. See Chirol to Bell, January 20, 1906.

The pronouncement of the German professors was well-timed. but it was the attitude of the Government at Algeciras that was really significant. The Conference opened on January 16. It was understood by both sides, and publicly, that Britain would stand by the French. Simultaneously, the French Government desired privately to discover from Britain what action she would take in the event of a German attack on France. The question was asked before the election and repeated afterwards. Grey, pressed for a binding assurance, could only offer his personal opinion that, while Britain would not fight to put France in possession of Morocco, it would be otherwise if war was forced on France by Germany in order to break up the entente. At Algeciras The Times was well represented and Wallace, who went as "an independent observer" was, on the eve of his departure, received by King Edward, who urged him to take a conciliatory line and to use every effort to "bridge over the differences between Germany and France." Wallace had Houghton from Madrid as his assistant. Harris appeared unexpectedly, owing to an office muddle.2

Wallace, as usual, was well regarded at the British delegation and elsewhere. Nicolson, for instance, felt "absolutely confident in his discretion.<sup>3</sup> The business of the Conference was to reconcile the French demand for predominance with the German stand for equality for all nations. Wallace's influence was consistently accommodating and pacificatory. "Wallace is making himself felt here" noted the Kaiser when it was reported that the Conference might bring satisfaction to Germany as well as to France.<sup>4</sup> The British supported the French: the Germans had the help of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Also Grey, on behalf of the Government, told Metternich on January 1, 1906, that "if things go smoothly at the Conference it will be possible to use our influence with effect to ameliorate the tone of the Press and public opinion here respecting Germany." (Grey, Twenty-five Years I, 196. Cf. G.P. XXI, 43; Dugdale III, 237.) Wallace's reports to Knollys for the benefit of King Edward VII are in the Windsor Archives.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Bell had told him to stay in Tangier; Buckle that he was to go to Algeciras.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Nicolson, Carnock, 171. "He has a cool head and his opinion is worth having," 4 Cf. Bernstorff's dispatch to the Wilhelmstrasse, January 16, 1906 (G.P. XXI, 93), "I hear from a well-informed source that Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, who has been sent to Algeciras by The Times as a special correspondent, was received in audience before his departure by His Majesty the King and instructed by him to do everything in his power to bridge the existing differences between Germany and France. Mackenzie Wallace's first telegrams, which have arrived, are definitely written in a conciliatory spirit." On this dispatch the Kaiser noted: "That is the direct consequence (1) of the big defeat of the Unionists at the elections; (2) of Beit's visit to me; apparently, he has reported nicely and fairly everything I told him, and is trying to bring back things to normal." The Kaiser added that "Wallace is very clever, sharp—of course a Jew—intimate friend of H.M., and will certainly fulfil his orders well." The Kaiser's description of Wallace "Jude natürlich," is worthy of Northcliffe who, of course humorously, pretended that all men with obvious Highland names were Jewish. James Grierson wrote to his sister on January 14, 1906, that a Franco-German conflict was being discussed by the soldiers "and in this case we shall be in it on the French side." (MacDiarmid, Sir James Moncrieff Grierson, London, 1923, p. 213. For the military conversations, initiated by Repington, see below.)

the Austrians and a promise from the Italians. Steed wrote from Vienna at the instance of the French Ambassador and of Goluchowski, to the Marquis Visconti Venosta, the Italian delegate, to say that Austria wished to work with Italy at the Conference.1 But the open hostility of Italy was the surprise of the Conference. It was undisguised; and, with the adhesion of Russia to France, completed the isolation of Germany. Matters were complicated on March 7, by the fall, due to its anti-clerical policy, of the Government of Rouvier. His successor, Sarrien, maintained continuity of policy, but, for the future, the driving force in foreign policy was Clemenceau, now for the first time in office as Minister of the Interior. By now, Repington's comments were couched in stronger language. He now developed a conception of the future based upon the statement, made in December, 1904, by the German Minister for War, General von Einem, that in the event of war it would be Germany's object to win at the outset. On March 5, 1906, in an article on the "Army and Parliament in France,"2 Repington wrote that "It is necessary that all British statesmen should understand, with all the consequences which will eventually derive from it, the central fact of the military situation in western Europe—namely, that, though France is for the moment almost on a parity with her eastern neighbour in numbers of trained men, this is not an advantage that she can retain." Help at sea, he proceeded, was not the first essential to France, for war would be decided on the land frontiers. If victory be not gained at the decisive point, success elsewhere, he held, would be barren. "The war, if it ever comes, will be fought out, and perhaps decided so far as France and Germany are concerned, upon the land frontier." This being so, he argued that, if the integrity of France or the preservation of the peace of Europe and the traditions of Liberalism are vital interests to any particular Power in Europe, then that Power is bound so to organize and dispose its armed forces, and engage those of its other allies, that it can give moral and material support to France at the decisive point within certain limits of time. An outstanding passage conveyed the hint that in the event of a Franco-German war England might not be able to afford the policy of remaining neutral.

On April 8, 1906, the Agreement was signed and, in due course, accepted by the Sultan. The Conference was generally regarded as a reverse for Germany. The defection of Italy remained a surprise since the Agreement by which France undertook to sup-

<sup>1</sup> Steed I, 234; cf. p. 478, infra.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Reprinted in [Repington's] *Imperial Strategy* (London, 1906) where the date of publication in *The Times* is erroneously given as December 27, 1905.

port Italian claims to Libya and Cyrenaica was unknown. The isolation of the Reich was now manifest. Disillusion in Berlin was widespread and deep. When the balance was struck, it became clear that, although the Morocco crisis had been brought about by Germany, the Franco-British entente was more cordial than ever, the Russian friendship was strengthened, and there was some sort of Italian understanding into the bargain. The Frankfurter Zeitung of ten days later, i.e., April 18, quoted by Saunders on the 20th, voiced a general feeling: "Germany cannot face the new aspect of affairs with very brilliant anticipations. The Emperor's telegram [describing Austria as his brilliant' second seems to point to the idea of drawing our Alliance with Austria-Hungary still closer. But if this be all that we have saved out of the wreck of the Triple Alliance it is very little. We can hardly face the new century arm-in-arm with Austria-Hungary alone."

On the same day as the appearance of this paragraph, the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung announced that it "heard" that Holstein had resigned. This was the measure of the German deficit on the Algeciras Conference. In reporting the incident, Saunders quoted Berlin assertions that Holstein's resignation had nothing to do with Morocco. The diplomatic papers on Morocco in the German White Book bore little trace of his well-known style, and lent support to the view that Holstein's influence had been waning between the end of June, 1905, and the beginning of the winter, when the strength of British resolution to support the entente prevailed upon Germany to abandon efforts to bully France out of it. The sending of such a man into the wilderness was a matter in which The Times took a natural and considerable interest. A long leading article (Flanagan) bade farewell to the "scapegoat" as to one whose "strong will, great abilities and unequalled knowledge and experience of the whole field of European politics enabled him, during the rest of his long life to be much more than the mere counsellor of his hierarchical chiefs." In the newspaper's estimate, Holstein not merely suggested their policy, he often inspired it; sometimes imposed it upon them. He exercised an influence and even an authority that were unique in the conduct of German affairs for nearly a generation. No permanent official and man in any other country had been so constant a force in European politics. Towards the policy of "this remarkable man," regarding Britain, the article was neutral. The Times had "no special reason to feel either gratitude or resentment." From an objective standpoint, it was impossible, the paper said," to refuse to this

#### APPEASEMENT OF GERMANY

striking type of great public servant, the tribute of our admiration." Whether his disappearance would affect German policy was a question.

In the meantime on both sides of the English Channel, British relations with Russia were under review. Good relations with that country were a strong element in the Gladstonian system, but no Liberal Government was likely to encourage Russian designs at the expense of Germany. Rather, one more attempt was made to overcome Anglo-German asperities. By good-will visits of German journalists and others to Britain and of their British colleagues to Germany it was hoped to educate the public opinion of both countries. These efforts were given little encouragement in the leading columns of *The Times*. The gatherings at the offices of the Daily News and the Daily Chronicle were duly reported, although Printing House Square was not represented at them. At one of the functions Mr. Winston Churchill in a speech to the German journalists took the opportunity to caution his audience that in Britain the patriotic editor was not necessarily an asset to his country, even if the paper which printed his lucubrations cost his readers threepence.<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere the attitude of The Times received greater appreciation. The business as seen by it was serious; the duty of Britain as interpreted by the journal was clear. A leading article of May 24, 1906, emphasized the perhaps not too welcome truth that "however great our desire for improved relations with Germany, and however strong and sincere the good will in this country towards the German people and those who represent it, such as the burgomasters of the great German cities, our attitude towards the official policy of the German Government must be based not on its professions but on its actual diplomatic practice." When the British return visit was paid in June, 1906, Saunders reproduced from the Kölnische Zeitung—a journal intimately connected with the German Foreign Office—the comment that any German sceptical of the value of such visits need only reflect upon the uneasiness of the French which was already being noticed in Berlin. The quotation was minuted by Eyre Crowe as "significant." The German reason for participating in these

<sup>2</sup> Minute of E. A. Crowe, June 26, 1906, on *The Times* Berlin telegram of June 24, (G. and T. III, 359-360.)

<sup>1</sup> The Times of May 18, 1906, reported Mr. Churchill, in proposing "The Two Peoples," as saying that . . . "One adverse influence of which they should all beware was the patriotic Press on both sides of the North Sea. The Lord deliver the nations from their patriotic endeavours! When a patriotic and a fire-eating editor was engaged in showing how patriotic he could be for a halfpenny or even for 3d., then he thought it was time for wise men to walk warily." (Laughter and cheers.) Ten days previously Haldane informed Metternich that he had personally discussed the situation with the principal personalities of The Times in the hone of setting them to mederate their anti-German personalities of *The Times* in the hope of getting them to moderate their anti-German expressions. But, reported Metternich to Bülow, Haldane found *The Times* incorrigible, although the tone of the leading articles had improved. (G.P. XXI, 781.)

good-will visits being thus exposed, *The Times* again became the object of attention. Once more it was thought in Berlin that by taking the correct steps Printing House Square could be brought to take a different line.

In July, Bülow reported to Metternich the misgivings of Seckendorff concerning British public opinion, were *The Times* not won round. The Chancellor said that "Chirol cannot forgive Holstein the break of 1896; Walter feels he has been insulted by Eckardstein. Do you think that, with your tact, you can do something in this direction?" The fact, rather, was that Chirol did not forgive Bülow. The attitude of *The Times*, as perhaps that of the Germans, was hardening under the pressure of developments which were rendered all the more menacing by the increasing weight of the armaments which backed the respective policies of the Great Powers. After Algeciras, the paper realized that the Powers were moving within a system of international counterpoise. But, it seemed, there was still no "alliance" between France and Britain and not even the sign of an *entente* between Britain and Russia.

But German hopes that the Dogger Bank incident would complete Russian alienation from Britain had been dashed by the very temperate comment bestowed upon Rozhdestvensky's performances and the obvious British desire to limit as far as possible their repercussions. On June 7, 1905, Lascelles reported to Lansdowne a conversation with the Kaiser. Complaint was once more made of the attacks on him in the English Press, which the Government, he said, could put a stop to if it liked. "On my attempting to protest, he said that he knew for a fact that H.M. [King Edward] shortly after the North Sea incident had interfered to stop the violence of the Press against Russia, and had succeeded in doing so." He knew what he was talking about, and had at last found out who it was who was doing all the mischief. It had taken him two years to find out, the Kaiser said: now he knew. He had taken a lot of trouble to discover the ultimate source of this trouble. Lascelles was naturally interested to share the discovery. It had hitherto been alleged that the soul of the anti-Germanism in the Press was either Chirol or Saunders, or both. When Lascelles asked the miscreant's name, now at last discovered, the Emperor answered: "Moberly Bell." This identification, it may be presumed, reposed upon reports made to the Emperor by Lord Rothschild or some other of his English friends. The congratulatory telegrams sent en clair to Saunders in 1902 and the

### AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN DISPUTES

negative results of King Edward's inquiries through Rothschild also increased the prominence of Bell. He would also be credited with the appointment of Steed to Vienna. This correspondent's messages often reported German activities outside Saunders's range of observation. Vienna, as a matter of course, had a direct interest in any re-establishment of the Berlin-St. Petersburg wire. Mérey had told Steed in 1904 that the tactics of the Government would be to leave the Austro-German commercial treaty unconcluded till next year in order to force Berlin to publish the terms of the Russo-German understanding. Then the Austrian Government would be able to see whether it was at all worth while renewing the commercial treaty.

The position of Austria vis-à-vis Germany being thus weakened, it was natural for Goluchowski to have a keener regard for the Monarchy's relations with Italy. Throughout the winter of 1904-1905 the Minister was haunted by the fear that Germany's initiation and conclusion of an arrangement with Russia signified a return to Bismarckian doctrine and prepared the way for a betrayal of Austria-Hungary whenever a profitable opportunity should occur. He was moved to accept, whether he liked it or not, the thesis, that only a close understanding with Italy would create the desirable equilibrium within the Triple Alliance. Accordingly, he proposed a meeting with Tittoni in the spring of 1905. During the same spring there was talk in certain circles in Vienna and Budapest of rebellion and even war. In Budapest Magyar nationalism was entering on a major dispute with Austria over the army, its finance, and its control. Hence "patriotic" distractions were under consideration in Vienna. In Budapest an Austro-Hungarian military intervention in the Balkans appealed to some. The Archduke Francis Ferdinand proposed to bring the Magyar nationalists to reason by occupying Hungary.

Of all the peoples under the Hapsburg monarchy, the Hungarians commanded in England the greatest sympathy. London, too, remembered that during the South African War Hungary had been notably less anti-British. Bell, Chirol and Amery looked with favour on what appeared to be a Hungarian drive towards autonomy and federalism. In the acute Austro-Hungarian constitutional conflict which developed out of a controversy regarding the organization and financing of the Imperial Army, the office was on the side of the Independents. The crisis came to a head at the end of 1904 when, on December 13, the coalition of Independents opposed to Count Tisza attempted a *coup* by entering the Chamber and destroying its

furniture. The consequent election returned the coalition. Steed, who took a deep interest in the Hungarian policy and in the Germanophile activities of the Magyar magnates, was in Budapest at the time. He was with Tisza as the returns came in to the astonishment of all, including the Prime Minister and to the Opposition leaders, Count Albert Apponyi and Stephen Rákovsky, of whom Steed also saw a great deal. But although Tisza promptly resigned, the coalition refused office, unless Francis Joseph should agree to the suppression of German in favour of Magyar, in the words of command to be used in those regiments in the Austro-Hungarian army that were recruited from Hungary.

There ensued a tense constitutional quarrel which for many months complicated the political situation of the Monarchy. The Archduke's remedy was to re-create national unity by the use of the expedient of a war, i.e., with Italy, and he commanded no small support for this "patriotic" enterprise. The Archduke had the General Staff on his side. Goluchowski, who had the Emperor's approval, remained faithful to a policy of genuine friendship with Italy, in the belief that only Germany could gain from friction between the two Powers. The General Staff's newly revised dispositions of the Austro-Hungarian forces were the occasion of considerable nervousness on the Continent. Chirol, who had been in Egypt in the middle of March, came home through Paris where he heard the matter discussed. In London he encountered anxiety at the increase of garrisons and particularly at the transfer of troops from Galicia to Tirol. Other evidence in the office pointed to the existence in certain German circles of the conviction that the next European war was already in sight, and that it would begin between Austria and Italy. The question was considered worth putting to Steed. His report of March 27, 1905, stated that the Italian Counsellor of the Embassy, Carlotti, had already informed Steed that any Austro-Italian clash, such as had been prophesied in various quarters, could not be of Italy's making, for she had no army to speak of. Steed believed Carlotti and proceeded to say that a fortnight earlier Count Khuen-Héderváry, an ex-Ban of Croatia and an intimate of the Emperor. had told the correspondent that it was his policy to try to convince Francis Joseph that "we shall never get over our troubles with Hungary until we raise some foreign question touching the Monarchy as a whole. Then and then only will people at Budapest understand how closely their interests are bound up with those of Austria." To Steed's question whether the reference was to the Balkans, the Count answered in the

### BALKAN ALARMS

affirmative. But the Emperor, Steed reported to Chirol, will do nothing rash and will not allow himself to be driven into any policy of adventure, for it did not follow that because Italy had no army the Austrians were equipped to face a combination of Italy and some Balkan States.

Throughout the whole of the dispute the sympathy of the office was freely accorded to the leaders of the Hungarian movement. That it might lead to a middle-class or upper-class revolution on the lines of 1848 was rather hoped than feared. Steed took another view. From the first he was convinced that any weakening by Budapest of Vienna's position could only strengthen Berlin. A united Hapsburg Empire in close association with Italy was the only brake upon German aggression in Europe. Steed, therefore, was a convinced supporter of the Monarchy and of Austro-Hungarian union. The Correspondent, moreover, believed that the Emperor was determined to see that peace was maintained.

# Finally Steed reported that:

The Austro-Hungarian military authorities say that their old artillery is good enough to fight Servia, Bulgaria or even Turkey, but they fear that if they move through the wicket gate at Novi-Bazar, Italy will make a fuss and they are not quite sure that their old artillery would suffice to fight Italy, Servia, Bulgaria, Turkey and probably Montenegro together; especially as Italy could get q.f. guns from France at a pinch. Hence the irritation against Italy, who has carefully created a diplomatic *impasse* by denying the right of Austria-Hungary to occupy Novi-Bazar, under the Treaty of Berlin, and claiming that in any case Novi-Bazar is included in the Visconti Venosta-Goluchowski agreement of 1899 in regard to Albania and the Albanian status quo.1

The sum and substance of Steed's report was that there would be no war immediately. The solution to the Austro-Hungarian constitutional dispute came by other means than war. In June, 1905, when Tisza insisted upon retiring, he was succeeded by a non-party Prime Minister, Féjerváry. There followed a constitutional crisis akin to that which had divided Sweden and Norway. It was described in a leading article as "pregnant with grave possibilities of evil for the world." The Times was oppressed by the fear that a break between Austria and Hungary must be anything but a peaceful one. In other words Austria would be bound to go to war; and the worst of it was that war in which Austria was engaged could hardly be localized.

<sup>1</sup> Steed to Chirol, March 21, 1905.

On July 6, 1905, Chirol dropped a hint to Steed not to make "too controversial" his answer to one of Apponyi's manifestos on behalf of the Independent Party published in The Times as a letter to the Editor. It was strongly felt in London that, whatever might be thought of the domestic policy of the Hungarians, the value of their friendly attitude towards Britain should not be lost sight of. The leader refrained from giving explicit support to the Vienna Correspondent, who had been criticized by Apponvi, but it adopted the conclusions of his reply, a column long, which appeared, also as a letter to the Editor, on July 8. Chirol himself was convinced that a policy of leniency and impartiality towards all parties was the soundest policy for The Times, while Steed's telegrams, the complete text of which was not in all cases printed. had given the impression that he was inclined to be "too combative" and to take sides. Meanwhile a universal suffrage proposal by the Hungarian Minister of the Interior was announced. It was to be made effective by Royal decree and to be followed by a new election. The proposal at once undermined the confidence. and revised the terms, of the Coalition. They were at last glad to take responsibility without delay. Incidentally, this was what Steed wanted, had hoped for and striven for. He believed with most people in Vienna that nothing but harm could come of an attempt at that time to copy the Norwegians. Chirol could only see that the incompatibilities of States, whether Norway and Sweden, or Austria and Hungary, were primarily matters of domestic importance. Whether separation was or was not detrimental to Hungarian interests was, he held, in opposition to Steed, one upon which a foreigner need not pronounce, and there was no need for The Times Correspondent to take sides in a controversy which was, in fact, of purely domestic significance. The main point at issue between Chirol and Steed was whether or not Hungarian separation, peacefully arrived at, had consequences for British policy. In any event, wrote Chirol to Steed on September 29, 1905:

We have to reckon with nations as with individuals, with their passions and prejudices, as well as with what we conceive to be their interests. We have got to take them as they are. We cannot fashion them according to our own notions or our own desires. The question really resolves itself into this—can the movement be arrested now by anything that we can say? Is it likely to be arrested at all? If not it seems to me unwise to tilt against it simply because we do not like it. The Hungarians have always been good friends to us, and I am not disposed to antagonize them for no useful purpose that I can see.

I hate to thrust my own views upon our correspondents or to interfere with the line which they with their local knowledge and inside

# THE AUSTRIAN SUFFRAGE

information think right to take, especially in the case of a correspondent whom I value as much as I do you. At the same time it is possible that just because you are in the thick of it you find it more difficult than I do to look at the thing objectively.

But Steed's view was that to stand by and allow the Coalition party in Hungary, without comment, to set ablaze the whole of Central Europe was no service to the Continent, and in fact a bad service to Britain; and that for the Coalition to prepare what would only be a disruptive and abortive separatist campaign, would play into the hands of Austrian "reactionaries" and the Germans. Steed held that as the movement was unlikely to succeed criticism would not be vain. The move which might have been practicable at the death of Francis Joseph had, at this time, been made prematurely. Whether the Wilhelmstrasse had played any part in it Steed was unable to discover, but he suspected that it would serve their ends.<sup>1</sup>

Of the "reactionaries," the Clericals were those for whom Steed had a personal dislike; but he admitted that there were advantages in their programme to let the 12 million Austrian Slavs exercise their predominant influence over the 9 million Austrian Germans, and thus break the back of Austrian Pan-Germanism. The preparations for the Austrian election on a universal suffrage basis took place in the interval between the Kaiser's visit to Tangier in March, Delcassé's resignation in June, and the meeting of the Kaiser and the Czar at Björkö in July: and, what was of greater superficial importance for Austria-Hungary, the independence of Norway in September. In November Prince Charles of Denmark was elected King Haakon VII of Norway. It was by no means clear how the Hungarian independents would react to the result, when known, of the General Election. If the voting should upset the balance of racial forces and the existing Magyar majorities in some districts be swamped, the consequences might be most grave. If the deadlock, which continued until well into the following spring, was the public sensation of Europe, factors of greater significance to peace were about to invade the newspapers.

In January, 1906, the attention of the Powers being centred upon Algeciras, Sonnino's short-lived Government appointed Visconti Venosta to represent the Italian crown. At the request of the French Ambassador in Vienna, and of Goluchowski,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Steed to Chirol, October 6, 1905. See also on October 5, 6, and 7, 1905, Steed's articles on Austria and Hungary summarizing the three years' constitutional conflict. The writer concluded: "The future of Hungary is a problem towards which Western Europe cannot remain indifferent; and, when all things are considered, and all chances weighed, the conviction must remain unaltered that the maintenance of the Magyar hegemony in Hungary is desirable."

Steed, as has been seen, wrote to Visconti Venosta giving him an assurance that Austria wished him to convey, *i.e.*, its desire to work at the Conference with Italy.

At the Conference itself, Goluchowski's action in authorizing Count Welsersheimb to save Germany's face by proposing, as an Austro-Hungarian suggestion, a compromise acceptable to Germany, earned him the "brilliant second" telegram from the Kaiser. The telegram was accepted in Vienna as a proof that Count Welsersheimb had acted under pressure from Germany while Goluchowski made no secret of his belief that the telegram had been circulated for the purpose of undermining his personal position. He had many enemies without and within the Monarchy. In Hungary, particularly, he was unpopular. The policy of that country, ruled as it was by a caste of Magyar magnates, had long foreshadowed friction in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and war outside it. British observers, including some at Printing House Square, were still biased by a sentimental liking for the nation of Kossuth. The solution to Austro-Hungarian domestic troubles lay, the office thought, in the extension of the principle of federalism to the constituent countries of the Empire. It was not a solution that seemed to Steed to be immediately possible or desirable. To Amery, who put the question to him, Steed replied:

The separation between Sweden and Norway is but a step towards a Scandinavian Federal Union. I should like to see our good Magyars federating with the Croatians, Rumanes and Slovaks of Hungary on equal terms, to say nothing of the Czechs and the Poles of Austria. This federation may come and the Magyars have been fools enough to give the Austrian revolutionaries a chance of working for it; but it involves the death of Dualism and the smashing of the Magyar State.<sup>2</sup>

But the obstacle to any progress was the existing Hungarian Coalition, which was, said Steed, far from being, what the office thought, an association of liberal minds. Anything might result from their pressure except a turn for the better.

A long telegram announced the settlement of the Hungarian Crisis in *The Times* on April 7, 1906. To Steed, whose messages had consistently urged upon the Coalition the necessity, from the Hungarians' own standpoint, of preserving the unity of the Empire, the result was particularly gratifying. His standpoint, it has been seen, had not at first been shared by Chirol, Bell or

<sup>1</sup> See p. 469, supra.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Steed to Amery, February 25, 1906.

#### VINDICATION OF STEED

Amery. He had more than once been asked not to employ "harsh epithets" against the Independent and Coalition Parties; and, on more than one occasion, his telegrams had been edited by Chirol and by Amery. The solution of the crisis brought him a handsome *amende* from his critics. Algeciras, which had cost Holstein his position, was not without effect upon Goluchowski. And, in his case, domestic politics seemed likely to contribute to his undoing. At the beginning of July Steed reported to Chirol that it was being freely said that he would not last until the September meeting of the Hungarian delegation.

In the meantime, *i.e.*, on February 23, 1906, Moltke, Chief of the German General Staff, had reported to Bülow on the general attitude of Britain towards Germany in the event of a Franco-German war. He said that England would not stand by and see Germany either overcome France or engage in any war that would mean the permanent German occupation of Belgium and the Netherlands. At the same time Britain's answer to German naval extension was made. The first Dreadnought was launched in February. The German Navy Bill of May, 1906, in a reply to British Dreadnought policy, provided for a large increase in ships and for the enlargement of the Kiel Canal.

In the same month at St. Petersburg two important diplomatic transfers were announced. First, Lamsdorff retired from the Foreign Secretaryship in favour of Isvolsky, formerly Ambassador at Copenhagen; and, secondly, Nicolson was transferred from Tangier (and Algeciras) to St. Petersburg.

The Czar's appointment of Isvolsky signified an acceptance of the policy to strengthen the alliance with France by effecting an understanding with Britain. Time was not lost. It was four days after Isvolsky's appointment that Benckendorff informed him that Nicolson was due to arrive at St. Petersburg in succession to Hardinge. In the same letter the Ambassador said a word in recommendation of *The Times* correspondent at the Capital, now that the journal had completely altered its tone. It was not long before Wallace (pressed by King Edward) appeared in St. Petersburg to advise Nicolson. His personal relations with Nicolson whom he had known for thirty years were the more intimate for their meetings at Algeciras. The great issue was the stability of the régime. Nicolson was inclined to take the view held at home by most Liberals, by many Conservatives, and by the Manager of *The Times*, that the autocracy could

not last. Wallace, always less positive in prophecy, drew the Ambassador back from a belief in the prospect of another outbreak that would surely result in its successful overturn. The heart of Wallace's case in favour of negotiating an agreement with existing Czarist Russia lay in his conviction that time was important to both countries and that on a review of the evidence the revolutionary forces were separated at this time by too many mutual antagonisms to be able to organize and to hold any power they might secure as the result of a new attempt at a coup d'etat. Wallace remained at St. Petersburg some seven months, in Nicolson's words: "obtaining information from sources generally closed to diplomatists, puffing huge cigars into the red silk curtains of his bedroom, reading revolutionary pamphlets." He visited the Czar, Isvolsky, Stolypin, Witte, Milyukoff and attended secret conclaves of the Social Democrats and Social Revolutionaries, investigating the vital question of the relative strengths of the Parties, constitutional and unconstitutional. Wallace was aware, also, that the friends of a Russo-German understanding were by no means inactive. He remained in St. Petersburg until July when he returned to London to find that, despite the launching of the Dreadnought, the Liberal Government recoiled from a naval race and that Campbell-Bannerman was announcing a reduction in Admiralty estimates.1

Wallace was commanded to visit Sandringham a week or two before the King left for his visit to Marienbad in August. While there the King took the opportunity to talk politics with his entourage.

Steed was in the company at Marienbad:

C.B. was there and Haldane and General Grierson. The King enquired very minutely into the position of Austro-Hungarian relations, particularly with reference to Franz Ferdinand and his wife the Princess Hohenberg, née Chotek. He said to me: "The German Emperor and I had a long talk on this subject at Kronberg. The Kaiser asked me what we were to do in case the decease of F.J. should confront us with the question of the future status of the Princess Hohenberg. I said that we must treat it entirely as an internal issue for Austria and for Hungary, and that as soon as the Princess Hohenberg had become the consort of an Emperor, we ought to recognize her as Empress as quickly as possible." Kaiser William, added King Edward, "assented, and said that he entirely concurred in my view."2

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Wallace's reports to Knollys, February-July, 1906. (Windsor Archives.) Wallace returned to St. Petersburg in November.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Steed to Chirol, August 28, 1906.

# KING EDWARD'S INTERVIEW WITH STEED

At the Friedrichshof meeting, the King informed Steed he had been assured that all was not well with the Monarchy. "I fear," said the King, "that not much reliance can be placed upon Austria-Hungary. I am told that Goluchowski is a dangerous fellow who ought to be got rid of." Steed replied that, while the Minister might not be a statesman of the first order, he was honest and had for two years been working steadily for peace and in the most difficult circumstances. "He has done what he could to improve Austro-Italian relations in the hope of creating a counterpoise within the Triple Alliance against German intrigues." "Ah," replied the King, "I see why the German Emperor told me at Friedrichshof that Goluchowski was a false Pole and a danger to Europe."

Three months later Goluchowski was dismissed and Aehrenthal appointed. The Times gave the outgoing Minister a cordial farewell. The leading article (October 22, 1906) stated that he had much to his credit: the Austro-Russian Agreement of 1897, which at any rate secured the peace if not the better government of the Balkans; the Austro-Italian understanding concerning Albania; the demonstration that the position of Austria-Hungary in the Triple Alliance is compatible with good relations towards other countries; the moderating influence, exercised at Algeciras and elsewhere, over the restlessness of Berlin were some of the fruits of the long and harmonious collaboration of the Emperor and his Foreign Secretary. Both Austria-Hungary and Europe had good cause to look back upon Count Goluchowski's tenure of office with satisfaction and gratitude.

But soon afterwards there was a new turn in Austro-Italian relations. Aehrenthal's policy, if the *Neue Freie Presse* was to be trusted, was not so friendly as his predecessor's towards his ally. On November 19, 1906, the Vienna journal wrote, regarding Austro-Italian relations and the condition of Albania, that "at present the relationship between Austria-Hungary and Italy helps to thrust the military question into the foreground. Hence the necessity of pressing for the sanction of prudential measures which no State in a similar plight can neglect, if it cares at all for its own existence."

Steed's denunciation of this paragraph was strong: "It would be difficult to employ language more wantonly pernicious." Such a provocative utterance was in complete antithesis to the facts printed in the Vienna paper's own news columns. The "military question" referred to was being used as a pretext

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for urging Hungary to strengthen the defences of the Empire for a better precaution against the hostility of Italy. A leading article in *The Times* of November 20, 1906, took the opportunity to point the moral that the Triple Alliance was not working well. No pleasure was taken in the fact, since peace in Europe was the prime necessity, but the harmony of its members could not be promoted by the "mischievous" intriguers with whom the *Neue Freie Presse* was connected. *The Times* believed that the policy of Italy was understood quite well, equally in Vienna and in Budapest. It was simple and natural and no attempt was made to disguise the fact that Italy and the Italian people needed peace and had no quarrel with the Dual Monarchy, whatever certain bands of irredentist students and self-advertising agitators might occasionally proclaim. But although this was so, the Italians had no wish to see the whole of the eastern shore of the Adriatic in the occupation of any powerful military State, however friendly that State might be at present.

On November 28, 1906, the Vienna journal published an interview between its Rome representative and the former Italian Foreign Minister. Prinetti expressed the hope that the German Chancellor would succeed in averting a great danger "which we all see approaching" of a Franco-Russo-English bloc, which, in certain circumstances, the Triple Alliance could hardly neutralize. "Italy and Austria-Hungary together," he said, "could not withstand a united attack by the French and English navies, and much less the weight of a new Triple pact created by the addition to France and England of Russia. The best will in the world could not guarantee loyalty to the old Triple Alliance against the compelling force of facts." And Italy recognized facts. "I heartily hope he [Bülow] may spare Germany the splendid isolation which, through no fault of his, threatens to become a reality; against which he is now working with German tenacity." The moral was plain: Italy did not feel she could afford adventures. That Italian irredentism was dead, The Times firmly believed, although it was admitted that neither Austria-Hungary nor Italy was blameless for the development of a situation that called for the exercise of statesmanship.<sup>2</sup> It was Steed's opinion that the responsibility for much of the trouble lay in the subterranean pan-German societies. A speech by Tittoni on December 18 noted a gradual improvement in Anglo-German relations. The Minister saw as the only obstacle

<sup>1</sup> Steed's dispatch in The Times, November 29, 1906.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Steed's dispatch, December 10, 1906.

in the way of the progress of this movement the action of a portion of the Press. The Times (in a leading article of December 19) alluded to the view of some who believed that Italy was weakening in her loyalty to the Triple Alliance and to the belief held in certain circles that an Austro-Italian war appeared desirable. This, if successful, would carry forward by a long step the southward march of pan-Germanism towards the Adriatic and the Balkans. The paper reminded Austria-Hungary of the risks to herself in any enterprise of this character.

Notwithstanding appearances, Aehrenthal's first statement on foreign affairs to the Austro-Hungarian delegations at Budapest laid stress upon the policy of maintaining friendly relations with Italy. "Judged objectively there exist no opposing interests between the Monarchy and Italy." With regard to Russia, he said, in all great questions the interests of Austria-Hungary and Russia were parallel. These words were read with some uneasiness. Nobody in the office wished to see the two Powers at loggerheads, but it was believed that the statement would not have been made without consideration for current German intentions. These had been clear since the sacrifice of Delcassé. In addition the Deutsche Revue for September had put forward a doctrine that The Times found it necessary to describe as "new and momentous." The Revue, proofs of which were obligingly supplied by the Editor, included, in an article on the Friedrichshof meeting of King Edward and the Emperor William, the statement "in an almost menacing form" that England would have to choose between two alternatives. One was the Anglo-French counterpoise which might be "disastrous" and the other was to extend English friendship to include Germany. understood this to imply another deliberate attempt to break the Anglo-French entente in advance of Algeciras. A long leader promulgated the classical British doctrine of the balance of power.

We see no reason whatever why we should quarrel with Germany, or why Germany should quarrel with us, but we do see many reasons why our relations with Germany cannot, in present circumstances, acquire the same character of intimacy which our relations with France have now happily acquired. To modify these relations, whether by addition or by subtraction, at the bidding of Germany would be to recognize a sort of German hegemony in Europe; and history is there to tell us that England's greatness is based upon her resistance in the past to similar claims of hegemony, whether they were put forward by a Charles V, or a Louis XIV, or a Napoleon. (September 5, 1906.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Steed's dispatch, December 5, 1906.

These words with their implications for Germany were not lightly written, for the leading article was printed within the knowledge that Anglo-Russian conversations were proceeding. Aehrenthal's December statement that "in all great questions the interests of Austria-Hungary and Russia were parallel" did not encourage optimism regarding the happy outcome, from the British standpoint, of these conversations. Of all the difficulties in the way of an Anglo-Russian Agreement the most serious, in the view of *The Times*, was the apparent instability of the Czarist Government. In P.H.S., Bell's opinion regarding Russia was given great weight. He was in regular correspondence with Wilton and, with him, held that a successful revolution in Russia might break out at any time and thus dispose of British efforts to secure a political understanding with the Czar. At the New Year, 1906, Wilton had written that:

When the long desired change in the Government will come no man can say, but I feel deeply convinced that it cannot be long delayed. The idea, so sedulously propagated by interested parties, that the revolution is crushed appears to me to be a rank absurdity. But there is no denying the fact that the Revolution has been mismanaged and that some time must elapse before it can gather force enough to complete its struggle. The government will, however, hold out as long as the money lasts, and that of course depends upon the French or German financiers who at present show some tendency to revert to their former infatuation. However, the events of the next few months will, I fancy, cure them for good.<sup>1</sup>

Wilton's optimism seemed misplaced, or at least mistimed. In a few weeks the strength of what The Times continued to describe as "Reaction" was so noticeable that Walter asked Lionel James, a staff correspondent of the paper, to discover from Wilton what the chances were if the "Reactionaries" secured more power. Wilton's answer to James was that the Duma would not be reactionary and that in any case the Government would take no steps against him as correspondent of The Times, or against any correspondent. He had several times been intimidated, but assumed that it was merely bluff. The opening of the Duma was not unlikely to be considered by the Russian Foreign Office a fitting opportunity to restore official relations with The Times. However, there were serious political factors to be reckoned with. One effect of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, and the prospect of its renewal, was to make the policy of rapprochement with Russia depend upon a Middle Eastern understanding, i.e., an arrangement regarding the Straits and Persia, extending to the Indian frontiers and the coast, and the connexion of the whole

<sup>1</sup> Wilton, St. Petersburg, to Bell, January 11, 1906.

# THE TIMES AND RUSSIAN STABILITY

with the Baghdad Railway. But every Russian arrangement of any kind, with any Power, was conditioned at this time by the necessity for money. In all European Capitals, Russian external loans, and the question of French, British and German participation in them, acute questions in themselves, were bound up with politics, the possibility of territorial and industrial concessions and the larger question of the international alliance system. As Saunders, for instance, reported from Berlin in *The Times* of April 3, 1906:

The question of the participation of German finance in a new Russian loan is being eagerly discussed, and a good many amateur politicians have been suggesting that the Government ought to forbid or discourage German participation in order to punish Russia for her attitude at the Morocco Conference.

A "clerical" speaker in the Reichstag debate later in April, 1906, drew cheers when he said that no German money should be invested in Russia. Simultaneously, rumours of an Anglo-Russian political settlement were current. It was hinted in Paris that announcements, so premature, were being deliberately put out in Berlin with the object of arousing opposition in Russia, presumably from the revolutionaries. The Germans took their decision. Russia suffered for the support she had given to France. Germany refused to allow the loan to be floated in the German market and it was rumoured that she had not only prevented Austria but was trying to prevent England and the U.S. from joining in. Meanwhile, if Britain considered lending the Czar money she risked alienating the Russian radicals, who threatened the most serious consequences if the City were to lend.

The City of London was naturally cautious. Information was meagre and contradictory. The Times, which enjoyed the best possible sources, was able neither to print all it knew nor to make up its own mind concerning the all-important matter of the stability of the autocratic régime. That the journal had no sympathy with the autocracy was a complication. An outbreak was expected in the spring, and, after disappointment, in the summer of 1906. In July of that year Wilton, needing a change, came to London in order to see Bell. He left in charge of his correspondence M. Hessen, one of the Editors of the Cadet organ, who was "admirably placed to get the news before everybody elseunless, as now seems unlikely, the Reaction sets in at once." But nothing happened. It now began to be believed, in Wallace's words, that "repression did not always fail." That, Wallace insisted to Bell, was still his opinion. That was the opinion which he gave to Nicolson, the British Ambassador. It was the opinion which doubtless filtered through to the City.

The Rothschilds, it may be guessed, received similar intelligence from very high sources.1 Russia, which had already cultivated the press of the West, in particular that of France, was now fully aware of its need of British newspaper support for the projected loan. The Russian Ambassador in London thus explained to Isvolsky his position in this respect: "Moi, j'ai des rapports avec le Daily Telegraph, le Standard, moins avec le Morning Post et le Westminster. Avec le Times extrêmement intermittant et très indirect." He admitted that he noticed at this time. August. 1906, an improvement in the tone of The Times. It did not go very far, for the character of Wallace's correspondence with P.H.S. was personal rather than professional. He was not prepared to express opinions with that degree of confidence that would alone justify his dispatching messages as from a source which the newspaper trade honours under the title of "Our Special Correspondent." Hence he preferred the complete independence which had been his since 1904 when he retired from the Encyclopaedia Britannica. Greater leisure gave him increased opportunities for collecting crowned heads. By 1905 he was intimate with King Edward VII. He was also in confidential relations with the Czar and with leading Russian statesmen.<sup>2</sup> Isvolsky who dined with Nicolson several times in July found Wallace a fellow-guest. He then learnt that he was in St. Petersburg on a special mission for King Edward and acted as adviser to the Ambassador. Isvolsky had frequent talks with Wallace, with whom he was in full agreement. When the Czar received Wallace, he spoke to him with entire frankness in support of the Moderate Liberals.<sup>3</sup> He may have felt that higher interests would best be served by his not immediately publishing his views, and thus replied on August 8, 1906, to Bell's invitation:

I do not wish to publish letters at present on the condition of things in Russia. My chief reason is: I do not feel at all sure that I have thoroughly mastered the subject. You are quite right (and I have no

<sup>2</sup> On July 16, 1906, Benckendorff informed Isvolsky that he had seen the King on the Ton July 16, 1906, penckendorn informed isvolsky that he had seen the King on the previous day, when H.M. said that he would write to the Emperor (Nicholas II) and that Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace would take the letter with him tomorrow. (Cf. Isvolsky, Corresp. Dipl., p. 332.) For the effect of Wallace's dispatches to the King, see Isvolsky, op. cit., p. 340.

3 See Wallace's dispatches to Knollys (Windsor Archives) from July 23 to December 9, 1906; C. L. Seager, Memoirs of Alexander Isvolsky (London, 1920), pp. 194-6.

<sup>1</sup> Wallace was in regular communication with King Edward VII. He had Witte's view of the prospects of revolution on November 13, 1906. "The real risk existed during October, November and December, 1905; and collapsed in the latter months..." Nicolson, Carnock, p. 245. Wallace's Papers preserved in the Cambridge University Library consist of two large deed boxes and a third smaller one. The first two contain Library consist of two large deed boxes and a third smaller one. The first two contain the manuscript of his extensive and unpublished survey of the Foreign Policy of Europe since the Renaissance; the third contains his Russian studies and the memoranda compiled between 1905 and 1907. The Papers relating to revolutionary movements include his analysis of the doctrine of Marx and Engels, the tactics and divergences of their Russian disciples. The history of the Social Democrats is traced through the reports of the congresses since 1898 to 1907. (See infra, p. 488 and Appendix, pp. 834 ff.)

# WALLACE ON RUSSIA IN 1906

hesitation in confessing it) that in my previous judgments I made a serious mistake, which consisted in underestimating the force and velocity of the revolutionary current, and consequently in predicting, as you remind me, that there would be no revolution in Russia in our time.

That grave disorders might occur I foresaw and admitted, but I imagined that as soon as the national prestige and the integrity of the empire were in danger there would be a general outburst of patriotic sentiment, such as occurred during the Polish insurrection of 1863 with which Russian liberal opinion at first sympathized. After the disasters in the Far East I expected this outburst of patriotism and it did not come. On the contrary the outburst of public feeling took the form of a reckless fury against the bureaucracy and the autocratic form of government, and this state of public opinion so dislocated the administrative machine and demoralized the officials (pretty well demoralized already by their own vices) that for the last few months the country has been in a condition of lawlessness and disorder such as it had not seen since the so-called Troublous Times of the 17th century. Whether my expectation of a patriotic outburst against anarchy may not still be realized I do not know. There are already some curious symptomatic indications of such a reaction, but they are too vague to justify any general conclusions.

Having confessed one serious mistake, Wallace added that he was in no hurry to run the risk of making another by rushing into print without serious reflection. He reminded Bell in an ironical paragraph that he lacked the Manager's "careful study" of the "science of revolution." Wallace was not prepared to believe in advance that any Russian Revolution would necessarily follow the lines of 1789 rather than 1848. In any event, he said, the policy of the Constitutional Democrats, i.e., to make all manner of government impossible except by themselves, was not practicable. Once in power, their proletarian allies, who were expert fomentors of disorder and terrorism of every kind, would by no means cease giving trouble to the bourgeoisie. To imagine that the adherents of the proletarian Socialist, or Anarchist, Republic, i.e., those who hated middle-class Constitutionalism as much as they hated Autocracy, and who formed the most energetic of all the revolutionaries, would play the part Bell assigned to them, was absurd. Wallace emphasized his point by recalling that one of the Cadet leaders had declared to a friend of his that he would shoot down the Anarchists more freely than ever the bureaucrats had done; and this came from the leader of a party, really of humanitarian Liberals, the men who had demanded from the first Duma the absolute abolition of capital punishment and the liberation of the Terrorists.

The argument was lost upon Bell, who, in any case, had to take Walter's views into account. Both continued to say that "the articulate voice of the majority was for revolution." This, too. was the general belief in Britain. But neither Walter, nor Bell. nor anybody else in the office knew enough of "revolutionology"1 to understand that, in the view of the Anarchists and Socialists. the Duma signified only that the Autocracy was prepared to make a show of parting with an inestimably small fraction of power, and that only to the capitalist class. Wallace summed up the discussion by saying that if "revolution" meant a socialist republic, neither the people nor the Cadets would have it: that what the people wanted was land, and what the Cadets wanted was Office. As to the Russian socialist parties, the majority were apparently in favour of some sort of coup which would involve the disappearance of both the autocracy and the bourgeoisie. Some few revolutionary socialists were ready for a temporary alliance with the Cadets, but as none of the socialist parties was legal, and public meetings were impossible, the situation was not easily ascertained. But for the present, Wallace held that the Cadets would have to ally themselves either with repression or revolution; and repression was the stronger element. As time proceeded, he became firm in his belief that the Autocracy was not yet defeated. The office, however, held to the Cadets.

Simultaneously, Sir Edward Grey, in view of Russia's increased need for money and the objection of members of the British public who possessed it to being placed in the position of financing "Reaction," pressed Benckendorff on the point of internal reforms. On October 21, 1906, Isvolsky advised Benckendorff that, on the day of writing, he had a long conversation with Mackenzie Wallace. He was due to have an audience with the Czar at Czarskoe Selo on the following day, and then to leave for London. Isvolsky pointed out to Wallace the importance of continued patience. It was the lesson of Wallace's own

¹ Wallace's term. He was at this time (Autumn, 1906) reading the pamphlets of the revolutionaries and wrote for Nicolson a memorandum recounting the history of Marxism and the Social Democratic Party which, after the repression by Alexander III, seemed to have come to an end. But "After a few years, it began afresh. . . . Some of the exiles who had settled in Switzerland . . . but while shifting to more practical ground the movement did not lose its essentially academic character. Nearly ten years were spent in studying and discussing the abstract doctrines of scientific socialism as expounded by Marx and Engels, and it was not until about 1894 that a serious attempt was made to put Social Democratic ideas into practice." Wallace refers to the period of Lenin's first work, illegally circulated in Russia, What the "Friends of the People" are; which propounds the first mature Marxist solution to the revolutionary problem and opposes the Narodniki with the programme of the Social Democrats. He proceeded to point out that the new leaders of the student-class were more practical than their predecessors and of great value as strike leaders. He concludes his memorandum, dated November 5, 1906, with the Manifesto of the Revolutionary Students. (See Appendix, pp. 834 ff.)

# WALLACE BRINGS ROUND THE TIMES

article, published in The Times of October 27th of the previous vear, on "Russia's Future Foreign Policy," which had given a warning against forcing the pace while the internal condition of Russia was uncertain. Isvolsky's difficulties with the Russian General Staff and the Russian industrialists were hardly less. It was out of the question for Chirol to write eirenically in The Times so soon after the first Duma was forcibly dissolved, and the Autocracy was reasserted more fiercely if not more firmly than Moreover, there remained the problem of Russian Imperialist policy in Persia. The office shared the general disbelief in "Reaction," although it was not yet realized that, as Wallace said, the successful dissolution of the first Duma indicated the postponement of revolution, middle class or socialist; the dismissal of the second, a year later, confirmed that estimate. Regarding Persia, Spring Rice, Secretary to the Embassy at St. Petersburg under Hardinge and now Minister in Persia, was in regular correspondence with Chirol during the summer and winter of 1906, and the spring of 1907. His view, which later turned out to be correct as far as Persia was concerned, was that Russia was not to be trusted and that any Anglo-Russian entente would blight the flourishing democratic movement in Persia and make enemies of those who might well be the future rulers of that country, just as in Russia the victorious democrats would hate England if she lent money to the Autocracy. In such case the new Russia would never keep faith with Britain as against Germany.

It was only later in 1906 that Wallace induced The Times to comment in a less bitter tone on internal Russian affairs. He had taken a lot of trouble to inform himself regarding the condition of the country and now believed that the strength of the revolutionary movements lay rather in the ranks of the intellectuals than among the mass of the workers. In September, 1906, Benckendorff noted that The Times had for some time been taking the line that Russian events were so profound and complicated that it was necessary to suspend judgment. But now, he said, in view of the importance of the political interests involved in the project of securing a settlement of all outstanding issues between the two countries, it was essential to obtain the support of The Times. It was therefore necessary to come to terms with the journal. This meant direct negotiation. Negotiation was important in any case for, although Bell at the end of the year 1905 was willing to revise Wilton's appointment as a whole-time representative, he could not then

<sup>1</sup> The correctness of Wallace's analysis is borne out by the figures given in N. Popov's Outline History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (London, Martin Lawrence), printed in the U.S.S.R., 1935, I, 143.

secure Walter's consent. The Chief Proprietor seldom took a personal hand in foreign affairs, but since 1902 he had regarded Russia as "outside the pale of civilization" and could not be brought to tolerate any situation that might result in any further insult to *The Times* and to Braham.

To repair the damage done by Braham's expulsion from Russia in 1903 was not easy. The initiative had to come entirely from the Russian side. But Benckendorff was eager for a change, and his First Secretary of the Embassy was appointed to negotiate with *The Times*. Bell was intransigent; in 1903 his view had been "if they ever ask for Braham they shall have him, but no one else," and in 1906 he took his stand on the same principle, *i.e.*, that the former correspondent must be asked for and that when he was back in his old position *The Times* should publish the fact. Even Chirol regarded these terms as too severe. He thus remonstrated:

I think before telling M. Poklewski that I can do nothing further in the matter as his proposals are unacceptable to *The Times*, I should see Arthur Walter, as he himself suggested, on Thursday, and tell him how the matter stands.

Considering the influence which Poklewski is known to have with the Ambassador—and Poklewski would naturally resent the rejection of his overtures—I doubt very much whether the Ambassador would have taken (sic) any further steps in the matter. That, you may say, is their affair and not ours, and we can get along very well as we are. If we had not been approached at all, I should agree with you. As it is, I think no impartial person would hold that the Russian Government have not held out a very substantial olive branch, and we should be regarded as having stuck out for an admission which a government can hardly be expected to make urbi et orbi. I certainly would have had nothing to do with it if I had not understood you to be of opinion that we could afford to be magnanimous.<sup>1</sup>

If Walter and Bell relented it was because Wilton's position needed to be considered. Negotiations were transferred to St. Petersburg, where Wilton, who had been unofficially accepted as persona grata, naturally desired to have his position regularized. He was, nevertheless, instructed not to hasten the negotiations: "Be careful not to convey impression that we are in hurry. We merely made suggestion as enabling us to respond to their wish that former relations be restored and we can wait."

Benckendorff, in the meantime, found it necessary to answer Kokovtseff's earlier and repeated statement that the influence

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Bell, November 20, 1906.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Chirol to Wilton, November 28, 1906. (F. F. 5/202.)



DUDLEY DISRAELI BRAHAM

# RUSSIA MAKES PEACE WITH THE TIMES

of The Times had diminished. The Ambassador, while admitting the paper's numerical inferiority to other journals, laid particular stress upon its unique importance in political and financial circles. A telegram regarding general foreign policy in The Times, he assured Isvolsky, had a thousand times the importance of a similar one in another newspaper, and it was the same in the realm of foreign finance. In December, 1906, Isvolsky was able to assure Benckendorff that the restoration of normal relations between Russia and The Times would soon be an accomplished fact. Finally, the persevering Poklewski was successful in London, and Bell was empowered by Walter to agree to terms and thus Wilton became "Our Own Correspondent" in St. Petersburg. No doubt the phrasing of the communication sent by Wilton from St. Petersburg on December 15, with its specific mention of Braham, represented the agreed formula for publication. It went far towards admitting Walter's demand:

I am authorized to state that the administrative measures directed against the former Correspondent of *The Times* in St. Petersburg, Mr. D. D. Braham, have been recalled.

On the 17th, the rubric "From Our Own Correspondent" reappeared over the St. Petersburg correspondence and a leading article stated that

We had the satisfaction of announcing on Saturday, in a telegram from St. Petersburg, that the Russian Government has withdrawn the administrative measures directed, as we have always held, without justification against our former Correspondent, and the whole incident henceforth belongs, we trust, to a past phase in Russian affairs, which has, we know, been long regretted by many Russians.

The article proceeded to discuss the need for political understanding between Great Britain and Russia:

History has cast upon England and Russia the duty and the privilege of promoting together the peace and progress of the Middle East, and nothing but our distrust of each other could cause them to devolve upon others. The re-establishment of our correspondence in St. Petersburg upon the footing which exists in other capitals will tend, we trust, to promote an intelligent knowledge of Russian affairs in England.

The opportunity for Anglo-Russian collaboration in Persia was described at length. It was plain that Wallace's view had now prevailed over Spring Rice's. The statesmanship of M. Stolypin

was commended; hopes were raised that "the worst days of the struggle between reaction and revolution may have passed away for ever." The great obstacle represented by the bad relations between St. Petersburg and Printing House Square had been removed. On December 25, 1906, Benckendorff expressed his congratulations. "Le Times est une très bonne affaire "1 and Isvolsky wrote to Benckendorff of his satisfaction at the settlement: "Remerciez je vous prie Poklewski de la manière dont il l'a menée." Lavino in Paris, who was in close touch with Nekludoff, the Russian Chargé, was delighted with this step towards the complete Anglo-Russian entente which he had ardently desired since 1900 or earlier. Wallace, it has been seen, had for thirty years dreamt of a political rapprochement. The office, generally, while far from certain that the new arrangement regarding the correspondence signified a fundamental change of attitude on the Russian side, felt satisfaction at the healing of a breach. It took pleasure in a strengthening of British friendship with Germany's eastern neighbour in a sense that would be compatible with Russo-German friendship all round.

The New Year witnessed a more determined campaign by British Liberals at home and abroad in favour of naval limitation. W. T. Stead was in Berlin towards the end of January, 1907, for the purpose of securing Tschirschky and Bülow's agreement to the British proposal for a limitation of armaments, in particular of battleships. Some time elapsed before an audience with Bülow could be arranged. Stead did not omit to remind the Chancellor of the delay when, one Wednesday evening, they met and Bülow, all smiles, rushed forward to him, protesting his delight and holding his guest's hand for five minutes while talking volubly about anything but naval restriction. At one stage of the conversation Stead managed to get in a mention of German chauvinism. "My dear Mr. Stead," broke in the Chancellor, "the mischief in England is that you read the wrong German papers." Stead's reply was that this could hardly be as in England no German newspapers at all were read. "Then," replied the Chancellor, "your newspaper correspondents read and quote the wrong German papers. There's Mr. Saunders. I wonder that The Times keep a man like that here, who so entirely misrepresents Germany to its readers. Mr. Saunders creates a Germany which does not exist, out of his own inner consciousness as the German savant is said to have evolved the idea of an elephant."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Benckendorff to Isvolsky, December, 1906. (Corresp., p. 413.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Saunders to Chirol, reporting Stead's visit and story, February 2, 1907.

# CONTINUED GERMAN COMPLAINTS OF SAUNDERS

Bülow could hardly have entertained the idea that the removal of Saunders as late as 1907 could, by itself, reverse the tendency of events. Nevertheless, complaints against The Times continued. Sir Fairfax Cartwright, Minister to the Court of Bavaria, reporting to the Foreign Office from Munich on March 13, 1907, the trend of contemporary German Press discussion, mentioned the Frankfurter Zeitung's reactions to the statements of The Times regarding the approaching conclusion of an Anglo-Russian agreement and added that the Frankfort paper had also drawn attention to the dispatches of The Times Paris Correspondent, "whose anti-German sentiments are well known," wherein it was insinuated that the Germans were endeavouring to draw Denmark into their net. The Times had also scandalized the Frankfort paper by seizing upon King Edward's conferring the G.C.B. upon Prince Henry of the Netherlands, as an occasion to praise the qualities of the Dutch and to conclude with the remark that Britain would never allow Belgium or Holland to be absorbed by a great European Power. The Frankfurter Zeitung's reply, said Cartwright, was that neither Belgium nor Holland are, or ever will be, threatened in their existence by Germany. His report concluded with some general statements concerning the Press. He said that complaints had been made in Germany that not enough British newspapers maintained correspondents in Berlin and "that it would be a good thing for the creation of better relations between the two countries if men of intelligence and impartial views represented the more important British newspapers in that city." The assertion was made that "the only English Correspondent of some standing in Berlin is the Correspondent of The Times." Unfortunately, reported Cartwright, "it is stated that he takes every opportunity of representing things in a manner unfavourable to the Imperial Government, and as the other newspapers in England receive their foreign information in a great part from The Times, the many views which the correspondent of that paper expresses with regard to Foreign affairs, filter, little by little, right down through the whole British Press." The writer quoted as a recent example of Saunders's bias, "which has recently been brought to his notice," a very long account of a colonial debate in the Reichstag during which an Opposition Deputy violently attacked the Government, while the Chancellor's reply was reported in a few words.1

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cartwright to Grey, March 13, 1907. (G. and T. VI, 15-7.) Cartwright added that it was "very unfortunate that The Times is popularly regarded as a British Government organ and can be influenced by them."

By coincidence, it may be presumed, a similar criticism was directed to Printing House Square by Herr Wegeler, an official of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office. Towards the end of May Chirol replied to it:

It is certainly strange that Herr Wegeler should quote as evidence of the justice of his charges against *The Times* the possession of "a stout volume of cuttings" from newspapers all referring to "the badgering of Germany by *The Times*" (die Hetze der "Times" gegen Deutschland). The reiteration of a charge is not evidence of its justice. The main reason for the charge I believe to be that throughout the crisis in South Africa and the Boer War, the development of the Far Eastern question and the Russo-Japanese War, and finally the Moroccan difficulty and the Algeciras Conference, *The Times* followed more closely than any other English paper the various press campaigns in Germany which served to illuminate the course of German policy, and being better informed than any other paper as to the simultaneous action of German diplomacy, was better able also to draw correct conclusions from the activity of the German press.

As to the existence of a Press Bureau in Berlin, the department of the Foreign Office presided over by one of its permanent officials, Dr. Hammann, is specially entrusted with the management of the Press and it is commonly known as the Press Bureau, though that may not be its official designation. When I was in Berlin, one of my most intimate acquaintances for a couple of years was an official of the German Foreign Office employed in that department and through him I obtained considerable insight into its methods. Its organization and functions have not changed since Dr. Busch described them in his diary, and though conducted today with much less ability it still exercises directly and indirectly a dominant influence on the great majority of German newspapers. In theory no doubt neither the Cologne Gazette nor any other German paper is compelled to publish what it receives from the Press Bureau, but in practice I fancy there are very few occasions when they do not find it expedient to do so in connexion with foreign affairs. The mere fact that very few German papers have any service of foreign intelligence at all comparable with that of the leading English papers makes them very largely dependent on the news doled out to and interpreted for them by the Press Bureau. The Cologne Gazette is one of the very few that have correspondence of any value from abroad, and no doubt, to use Herr Wegeler's own words, "with the aim and end of acting for the public good and for the general welfare," its correspondents abroad as in Berlin base their reports almost entirely on the official information which subject to their good behaviour in this respect is unstintingly given to them.1

Clearly, the feeling in Austria-Hungary was not tranquil. Early in the year, Aehrenthal, the Foreign Minister, had expressed to

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Steed, May 28, 1909, letter-book V, pp. 264-6.

# AUSTRO-ITALIAN FRICTION, 1907

Steed his anxiety lest the friendly relations between Austria and Italy, which his predecessor had taken care to maintain, should be prejudiced by anti-Italian influences at home, or anti-Austrian influences in Italy. And four months later, hearing that Steed was to take a spring holiday in Italy, he asked him to give Tittoni a message. It could not, the Minister said, very well be sent through usual diplomatic channels without risk of incident. Aehrenthal's message was to the effect that, while he was grateful for the cordial references to himself which Tittoni was now making in the Chamber, he would be materially helped if the Italian Ambassador at Belgrade were instructed to drop working in an anti-Austrian direction. "That is not a very pleasant message," Steed observed. "I will deliver it, and I shall bring you back the answer." Steed duly proceeded to visit his friends in Italy. Beside Tittoni, they included Visconti Venosta, Barrère, Sonnino, Luzzatti, and Prinetti,

When Tittoni received Steed on April 18, the Minister stated that the recent meeting at Gaeta between King Edward and King Victor Emmanuel had been extremely satisfactory. When the correspondent turned the conversation to Austrian affairs, the Minister proved from dispatches that his instructions to Guiccioli had been to preserve a wholly friendly attitude to Austria-Hungary and that the Ambassador had punctiliously complied with the instructions given him. "You can tell Baron von Aehrenthal what these papers contain. Tell him also that it would be well if his informants at Belgrade were more trustworthy." Proceeding, the Italian Minister told Steed that immediately after Aehrenthal succeeded Goluchowski he suggested a meeting. His idea was to destroy anti-Austrian feeling in Italy by the simple device of inviting Aehrenthal to Rome. In answer to Steed's question, the Minister said that relations between Italy and the Vatican had improved and that as Black Rome would make no difficulties, the Austrian Foreign Minister could proceed to pay his respects to the Holy Father immediately after he had visited the Italian Foreign Office and had been granted an audience with the King. The reason for the delay in Aehrenthal's visit lay, therefore, in Austrian internal conditions. In Steed's private opinion it was Austrian Catholic influence that had prevented Francis Joseph visiting Rome, and thus returning King Humbert's visit to Vienna in 1881. Since then the Austrian Government's willingness to arrange a royal visit, only elsewhere than at Rome, did not satisfy the Italian Government. And until this outstanding matter of courtesy was settled, the Italian people, Tittoni said, could not feel that the Austrians

were friendly at heart. The matter was not unimportant in view of the Emperor's age, for the succession of Franz Ferdinand without the establishment of the precedent of an official Austrian visit to Rome would accentuate the difficulty.

Meanwhile it was fortunate that Austro-Italian relations in the Balkans were improving. Tittoni admitted that, regarding the Italian Army, it was in a poor condition, but claimed that work upon the Navy was continuous and was bearing results. From inquiries he had made in Rome, Steed ascertained that neither the Italian Army nor the Navy could be expected to deal effectively with Austria-Hungary in case of war. In reporting the substance of his talks in a letter to Chirol, Steed said that:

Barrère, Lutzow (the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Rome), Sonnino, Luzzatti, Visconti Venosta, Prinetti, Egerton and others of less prominence agree that the great necessity of the present European situation is to close the door to German intrigue by bringing about a close understanding between Vienna and Rome. Barrère himself, who has long worked to smash the Triplice, now understands that when Rome and Vienna are on good terms the power of the Triplice as a German machine will be gone, or greatly diminished; and that when the time comes to renew the Alliance in 1912, the situation will wear a different aspect if Austria-Hungary and Italy have learned no longer to regard each other as natural enemies, but as countries having serious common interests of which the greatest is the prevention of any German advance to the Alps and to the Adriatic.

The strength of the Habsburg Monarchy was tested in May when the Election was due. Steed was back at Vienna in time to deal with it. The first Universal Suffrage Election conducted under the Habsburg Monarchy, which incidentally brought back into public life one of the Professors of the Czech University of Prague, Thomas Garrigue Masaryk, returned an overwhelming triumph for the Christian "Socialists" (185,000), the Social Democrats (125,000). "Personally," wrote Steed to Chirol, "I am well pleased. The smashing of racialism ought to revive foreign interest in Austrian affairs." Simultaneously with the election, Aehrenthal went on a visit to Berlin to see the Kaiser and Bülow on business of which more was to be heard by the world in general.

Steed's analysis of the diplomatic position, printed in *The Times* on May 16, 1907, emphasized the necessity of an under-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Henry Wickham Steed, Through Thirty Years I, 245-7; Steed to Chirol, April 22, 1907.

### ITALIAN INTEREST IN PEACE

standing with Italy as a preliminary to Austrian diplomatic independence from Germany. But

. . . it is certain that any serious attempt to remove the latent causes of misunderstanding between Vienna and Rome would lead to a reopening of the anti-Italian campaign of last autumn in the German organs at Vienna and to corresponding denunciations of "Austrian" rancour in the Press of Italy. "Italian intrigues in the Balkans" would be copiously advertised by the Press in Germany, and the dying flame of Irredentism would once more be fanned until Austro-Hungarian soldiers and politicians had been confirmed in a belief that Italy is their natural foe and that safety lies alone in complete adherence to German policy.

The underlying fact, vital to Europe as a whole, was Italy's interest in the maintenance of peace, which an understanding with Austria would confirm. Such an understanding would also have the effect of neutralizing the existing domination of Germany in the Triple Alliance. This, therefore, was the reason for the attacks on Italy which, from time to time, became conspicuous in that part of the Vienna Press which was under direct German influence. They might have great significance for the peace of Europe, since the existing term, which began in 1902, of the Triple Alliance expired later during the year 1907.

In May, an effort to deal firmly with Italy and the Balkans was determined upon by Aehrenthal. Later, too, he would deal with the Southern Slavs. For these reasons he required support which only Germany could give, and which she would give only on terms. Steed was uncertain whether Aehrenthal was genuinely, or for some obscure reason only in appearance, under the heel of Bülow. Aehrenthal's business in Berlin was to discuss with Bülow an entirely new combination of Powers. The new scheme was nothing less than the formation of an *entente cordiale* in the Near East by the extension of the Austro-Russian Agreement over Macedonia concluded in 1903 at Mürzsteg and that so as to include Germany and France. Steed learnt of it from an intimate in the Russian Embassy. "The formula," wrote Steed to Chirol,

is that Russia should bring in France as her 'second' while Austria-Hungary brings in Germany as her 'second,' the object being, of course, to exclude Britain and Italy from any share in the treatment of Near Eastern questions and to form an anti-British combination that will lend Germany support in the Baghdad Railway business. As the source of my information was good, I went to-day to the Ambassador to consult him, and found that Crozier, the new French Ambassador, had just been to inform him of the same scheme.

. . . I shall warn the Italian Ambassador, whom I have to see, on

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another occasion. . . . The Russians tell me that Aehrenthal constantly complains to them about the Anglophilism of Zinovieff, the Russian Ambassador, at Constantinople. Aehrenthal makes no secret of his anti-English attitude in talking to them and to the Germans."

Steed, having put the British Ambassador on his guard against Bülow and Aehrenthal's new League, saw the Italian Ambassador, with whom he was especially intimate. At first sceptical, the Ambassador finally said, "This Quadruple Entente of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia and France would justify Italy in cutting adrift from the Triple Alliance." Ten days later, Steed informed Chirol that the Prince Ourousoff. the Russian Ambassador at Vienna, had received from Isvolsky a message negativing the Near Eastern entente scheme; and he added, "I expect the Isvolsky dispatch will make a very unpleasant impression at the Ballplatz." It was at this point that Steed sought out Aehrenthal for the purpose of delivering the message which Tittoni had entrusted to him.2 The Minister spoke pessimistically. He mentioned Turkey's increasing strength. The Greeks had derived encouragement from the presence of the King of Italy and Tittoni, and the results of their visit made difficult the fulfilment of the Mürzsteg programme. Steed left the Minister with the conviction that his information about the Quadruple Entente was accurate. It was now desirable to refer to it in The Times and, bearing in mind the circumstances in which he first learned of the project, in such terms as would give no clue to the source. Hence Steed suggested to Lavino that he should refer to the scheme in one of his telegrams. On May 23, 1907, The Times duly printed a message from Paris in which a veiled reference was made to an "ingenious scheme now entertained in Vienna for a shuffling of the cards which would place France in a diplomatic arrangement with Germany, and would even bring those Powers closer together." "But," proceeded the telegram, "the entente cordiale will remain intact," but, it was emphasised, it did not preclude friendly relations with the rest of the world.

Meanwhile, the Italian Ambassador informed Steed that he had discovered that before Aehrenthal's visit to Bülow important negotiations had been proceeding between Austria-Hungary and Russia. Something must have happened, he said, to alter Aehrenthal's design to exclude England and Italy from the Balkans. The forthcoming visit of Aehrenthal to Italy made

<sup>1</sup> Steed to Chirol, May 18, 1907.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See supra, pp. 495-6.

# A PROJECTED NEW GROUPING OF POWERS

the matter of great significance. On the 29th, Steed wrote to Chirol that he had

learned to-night on excellent authority that the Russian Ambassador, Prince Ourousoff, received to-day from M. Isvolsky a dispatch informing him that Russia cannot accept the proposals made to her by Austria-Hungary for a special agreement between France, Germany Russia and Austria-Hungary in regard to the Near East, and instructing him to beg Baron von Aehrenthal to make the necessary communications to the other two Powers. The entente à quatre thus vanishes into smoke for the time being and it appears that Russia sticks to England. I have not yet been able to ascertain how far France entertained the Austro-German proposals but hope to do so ere long. I wrote you that before Aehrenthal went to Berlin a month ago he was full of the idea of promoting an entente between Germany and France, but that after his return he was silent on the subject. I have now heard from two sources that he declares he found the entente already en train and says that at Berlin il a enfoncé une porte ouverte in urging them to come to an understanding with France. . . . I have informed our Ambassador of the new turn in the situation.

A week later The Times printed under the headline "The Grouping of the Powers" a telegram which aroused interest in Continental diplomatic circles. The message said that it was known in Paris and other Capitals that moves necessarily imperilling peace, which was ostensibly the chief concern of all European Powers, had failed. Simultaneously, Lavino reported from Paris the currency of a strong rumour that foreshadowed a Russian agreement with Japan, the effect of which would be that Russia would have "liberty to devote her attention to Europe." Steed's prediction that "something new and strange was stirring beneath the surface in Austria"2 ranged beyond the realms of the Habsburg Monarchy. Aehrenthal now could not help being seriously concerned at the international diplomatic situation. Isvolsky, having rejected the proposal for an Austro-Russo-Franco-German entente, Aehrenthal naturally suspected that Russia was more interested in another proposal from some other source, which could only be Britain.

It was not desirable in such circumstances to fall foul of Italy. Aehrenthal's visit to Tittoni took place at Desio on July 15, 1907. The necessary business was the renewal of the Triple Alliance, which expired that month, and, of course, the Macedonian reforms. The Italian Minister gained the assurance that Austria-Hungary would remain faithful to her engagements towards

<sup>1</sup> The Times, June 1, 1907.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Steed to Chirol, May 18, 1907.

Italy under the Triple Alliance. In due course, the Alliance was tacitly renewed by the members.

Meanwhile, although the Anglo-Russian talks in St. Petersburg proceeded, the progress made was hardly considerable. Wallace was only cautiously optimistic and the office was even hesitant. Wilton told Bell that the paper was being subjected to constant attacks in the liberal organs for its support of Stolypin. Bell, for his part, still cherished the view that the revolutionary movement was gaining strength. Chirol was frankly antagonistic. The Persian question was still unsettled. Spring Rice wrote to Chirol: "... have you counted the cost in Russia? Do you suppose your prostrations before autocracy, your longing for social recognition at all costs for the oppressor will escape notice? Already the Cadets are bitterly complaining of the courtly effusions of the now recognized correspondent of The Times." In the meantime The Times sponsored the Fund for Famine Relief. The news gave great satisfaction to the St. Petersburg Correspondent:

I am delighted to hear that you are supporting Russian Famine Relief. It is a great and good work, and you could not have a better channel than the Central Zemstvo organization. Nothing could better promote good feeling between the two nations, and incidentally counteract the venomous attacks which the liberal organs have lately started against *The Times* for its support of Stolypin.<sup>2</sup>

Wallace, once more in St. Petersburg in the spring of 1907, pressed his convictions upon *The Times* correspondent, who had hitherto relied for much information and not a little inspiration upon Milyukoff and his circle. In *The Times* the space given to intelligence of revolutionary movements had not for some time been generous. The paper of May 20, 1907, reported in skeleton fashion, doubtless due to the reticence of the participants, the congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party which had begun in London on May 13. The delegates, representing the Mensheviks, the Bolsheviks and the Bund, deliberated until the end of the month, and in June *The Times* announced that the Congress had voted to sever relations with the Cadets. The Bolsheviks had wrested control from the

¹ Spring Rice to Chirol, April 27, 1907, in Gwynn II, 99: a footnote says this refers to Wallace. In the marked "contributor's copies" at P.H.S. the St. Petersburg telegrams are attributed to Wilton. This need not be taken as decisive against Gwynn's footnote, since Wallace often liked to work behind some nominal correspondent. But it is clear from Wallace's letters to Knollys in the Windsor Archives that he was writing only private letters to The Times. The phrase "now recognized" is more probably used in the technical sense—the appointment of a recognized correspondent in December, 1906—and this would be Wilton.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Wilton to Bell, February 1, 1907.

#### ANGLO-RUSSIAN ACCORD IN THE BALANCE

Mensheviks.<sup>1</sup> Simultaneously, a letter to the Editor, signed by G. Bernard Shaw, John Galsworthy and R. B. Cunningham Grahame, expressed alarm at reports that H.M. Government was working towards an agreement with Russia and thus taking sides against the people. *The Times* support to Stolypin naturally aroused satisfaction in some circles in Russia and none in Britain; but informed opinion in London was aware that the removal of friction in Persia, China and Tibet meant everything to the safety of India. With the German Navy Bills in the foreground, Nicolson discussed during the summer of 1907 with Isvolsky the tangled business of Persia and the Afghan frontier. Wallace was in London but no less well-informed than usual.

The slight English Russophile sentiment was checked in June when Stolypin categorically demanded from the second Duma the suspension of practically all the members of the Social Democratic Party who had been responsible, it was alleged, for inciting the army to mutiny. The Times feared that the dissolution of the second Duma might be followed by a third and more extremist assembly. The leading article in which this opinion was expressed was the subject of comment in the Anglophile Russ which was able to quote similar opinions from Russian sources. Later in the month influences in favour of Germany won expression, and on August 1 The Times correspondent wired his impressions of the effect likely to result from the meeting upon international relations between the Czar and the Kaiser now about to take place. "There is no reason to believe that any modification is contemplated of the policy based upon the Franco-Russian alliance and its logical development, the impending Anglo-

¹ Wallace compiled his own detailed report of the London Congress and while at St. Petersburg in 1906 and 1907 made a digest of the controversies between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks, illustrated with references to, and extracts from the works of Martov and Lenin. Page 4 of section 1 of cahier No. 7 reproduces Lenin's motion at the Congress of 1903 requiring every member of the party to be active personally in one of the party organizations. Wallace adds that centralization resulted and gave extensive powers to the Central Committee. There follows the story of the quarrel between the contributors to Iskra, notably between Lenin and Plekhanov. The dispute between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks regarding agitation in the Zemstvos are chronicled in some detail and there is a section on the idea of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Cahier No. 8 (March 1, 1907) embodies a report, pieced together from newspapers (Russ, Slovo, &c.) of the Stockholm Congress of 1906. Lenin is quoted as having laid down the principle that "We must put forward our own Social Democratic projects, which are not 'Liberal,' or 'Bourgeois,' and which are written in revolutionary language, and not at all in the style of the Chancellery; and we must insist upon having them submitted to the vote. Let the Black Hundreds and the Cadets reject them. We shall then proceed to the merciless criticism of the projects of the Cadets and expose their pseudo-democratism." Wallace notes that "Mr. Lenin perceives that such tactics make it impossible to have the leadership of the other Left groups; but this does not alarm him. He thinks that the party must advance on its own revolutionary path without seeking permanent allies." There is an account of the motion for general expropriation supported by Martov, Trotsky, Pozhkov, Lenin, Groman, i.e., by both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks. (See also Wallace's letters to Knollys in the Windsor Archives; in particular his letter of September 12, 1906, on the "doctrine of the exclusive domination of the Proleta

# ACCORD WITH RUSSIA

Russian agreement." On the 7th The Times emphasized the lesson that it had long been a primary requirement of German policy to preserve the best relations with her Eastern neighbours and that any understanding between Russia and Britain must be entirely compatible with a durable Russo-German friendship.

The agreement between Russia and Britain was concluded on August 31, 1907, by Isvolsky and Nicolson. It had not come easily, but it had come. *The Times* naturally supported it. There was, in fact, little choice. Chirol, however, was far from enthusiastic. He had never been a Russophile and unburdened himself to Morrison on September 2:

Well, the A.R. Agreement is signed, for better or for worse. It is by no means an ideal agreement, and there are many things in it which go desperately against the grain for the author of The Middle Eastern Question. But on the whole I have decided to support it. For one thing if we had had no Agreement things would merely have gone on drifting from bad to worse, as the present Government, with all due respect for Sir Edward Grey be it said, would never have made up its mind any more than did its predecessor, to put down its foot at any given moment and say so far and no further. The Agreement does tie them as well as Russia down to a minimum which, low as it may be, one will I trust be able to make them stick to. Then again there is the important consideration about the balance of power in Europe, and if the Agreement deprives Germany of the chance of playing us and Russia off against each other, as the Anglo-French Agreement deprived her of the chance of playing us and France off against each other, that will unquestionably be a very great gain.

The recognition of our rights in Afghanistan also means a great deal. As for Thibet, that is a gone coon. It is to be left to stew in its own juice under the blessed suzerainty of China. Nothing else was to be expected from the present Government, considering that the late Government practically resigned itself to this when it threw over the Indian Government and virtually sacrificed all the political fruits of Younghusband's expedition—mainly because Brodrick wanted to spite Curzon. The terms will probably be published by the time this reaches you. The publication has only been delayed at our instance in order to give us time to communicate it ourselves to the Emir.

Of course there will be a great outcry here amongst the rank and file of Conservatives at the recognition of Russian preponderancy right across the whole Northern half of Persia down even to Ispahan and Kerman Shah. On paper it does look like a tremendous give-away, but after all it is little more than the recognition of accomplished facts—facts for which Lord Salisbury and Lord Lansdowne are themselves responsible. We could not change them if we would, as we have not the material means of asserting ourselves in Northern

### THE ACCORD CONCLUDED AUGUST 31, 1907

Persia, and the present Government unquestionably would not if it could. On the other hand, the recognition of our ascendancy in Saistan and Persian Beluchistan—if we stick to it and render it effective—ought to put a stop to what I always thought was the real danger in Persia, viz. the ultimate absorption of those regions as well as of the North by Russia, and the construction of a Manchurian Railway down the Western borders of Afghanistan to the Indian ocean, which would have turned the whole flank of our position on the North-West Frontier. So even in Persia I think we have got the substance—if we only stick to it—and merely give away the shadow.

Another consideration is that according to all our military pundits. both here and in India, we could at a pinch hold and defend our new sphere of influence, but we could not possibly attempt to hold or to defend anything more. . . . The Japanese, I presume, would be rather pleased than otherwise, as, after their recent agreement with Russia by which the latter reiterates her acceptance of the status quo in the Far East on the basis of the Portsmouth Treaty, they would hardly relish the possibility of being committed by their Treaty with us to take part in a war over Central Asian questions in which they have no direct interest. The French, of course, are delighted, and Germany pretends to be, though she worked hard to defeat the Agreement in St. Petersburg, where her influence, through the semi-German Bureaucracy and Grand-Ducal cliques, is unquestionably very great. Nicky, however, played up, and it was due to his personal intervention that some very serious hitches at the eleventh hour were surmounted without any further concessions from London. Only ten days ago Stolypin and Isvolsky were outvoted at the Council of State to which the Agreement was finally submitted, and everything depended upon the Emperor's last word, which was decided and decisive.1

A satisfactory element in the general situation was the simultaneous publication of a Russian agreement with Japan. Sir Edward Grey at once announced his willingness to make similar contributions to peace by the conclusion of arrangements with Germany and other Powers. The opinion was expressed, nevertheless, that in concluding the agreement Britain had isolated Germany and, the Boer War being over, needlessly risked accord with the Germans. In a letter to *The Times* of September 10, Mr. H. N. Brailsford succinctly put the view of the Liberal and Socialist opposition: "Had peace been our object we should have sought it rather in Berlin than in St. Petersburg."

The Anglo-Russian Accord in combination with the Entente Cordiale, was bound to do much more than affect the balance of power between Britain and Germany, and to transform the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chirol to Morrison, September 2, 1907. Simultaneously, Chirol sent a copy to Steed asking him to treat it as "absolutely confidential" and not to say anything about the subject to the "Embassy people."

#### ACCORD WITH RUSSIA

situation. In particular it affected the relations of Austria with Turkey and with Russia and of Britain with these two Powers. In other words, the power of the Triple Alliance was weakened to the extent that Britain's policy towards the Balkans could no longer be relied upon as agreeable to Austria. Secondly, its weakness was increased by the tendency, now apparently constant, of Italy to gravitate towards France. Concurrently, German dependence upon Austria, as her only remaining reliable ally, was increased. Thus the policy of complete solidarity with the Dual Monarchy was unavoidable from the moment that the Russian alliance with Britain was seen to promise permanence. On the British side, statesmen henceforth had to take Russian policy into account. The accords were defensive but carried with them Continental responsibilities of imprecise character and degree.

The position of the Central Powers was not happy. Certainly the Triple Alliance had been renewed and Italy was still a member. But it was steadily becoming more obvious that Italy continued her membership, not because she was satisfied with its advantages, but because she had no alternative. Neither the Germans nor the Austrians desired to force her to leave the Triplice for the Entente Cordiale; but the upshot for Austria was that she felt an increased need of Germany. The position of the Powers towards Macedonia, as agreed at Mürzsteg in 1903, would be hopelessly one-sided without it. Possibly Austria alone could deal with Italy, but not with Russia, even after Mukden and Tsushima. The signature of the Anglo-Russian and Japanese-Russian agreements confirmed the worst fears of Austria-Hungary. The last thing that the Monarchy desired was that Russia should feel herself free to take a greater interest in the Balkans generally; that she should give signs of an immediate and particular interest in the Southern Slavs filled Vienna with the gravest apprehension.

Berlin, too, realized immediately after August 31, 1907, that it was more vital than ever for Germany, in her own direct interest, to maintain, and if possible increase, the prestige and power of Austria-Hungary in the Balkans. The Kaiser and Bülow, whether they liked it or not, whether they were fully informed or not, had now no alternative but to support Francis Joseph's Balkan policy. The influence of the Monarchy within the Triplice increased so rapidly within twelve months of the signature of the Anglo-Russian alliance that Austria-Hungary, as Germany's only sure ally, could command German support for her policy. The pride of the Archduke, of Aehrenthal, and of other like-minded

# THE TIMES AGAINST BÜLOW'S VISIT

Austrians naturally swelled. The help that William's "brilliant second" had given at Algeciras now had to be paid for. At the same time, Germany's friends in Austria-Hungary, that could be counted upon, were not too numerous or reliable, although in Hungary she could count upon more solid support. In other words, the new Anglo-Russian situation involved as one of its consequences a closer dependence of Germany upon Hungary. And the generally chauvinist and anti-Slav character of Hungarian policy made this dependence a proportionate danger to the peace. Thus Germany's state of isolation drove her into supporting an Austro-Hungarian ambition which, if aggressive towards a Southern Slav State, could not fail to embroil Russia. Nor were German relations with Britain about to improve.

In the autumn it was announced that the Kaiser would visit King Edward. The German Emperor's presence in England had always been agreeable to The Times, which never failed to welcome him in a leading article of more than ceremonial cordiality. But the report that on this occasion the Emperor would be accompanied by the Chancellor inspired the paper to utter a word of warning. On October 2, Sir Charles Hardinge asked Lascelles to prevent Bülow's visit to England "as the Editor of a very important newspaper" had already announced his intention to make it clear that the visit would not be welcome. Hardinge himself did not want Bülow to come, but had begged the Editor not to publish anything, at least not for the time being, since he thought the visit could be prevented without help from any newspaper. Lascelles's answer was that he had spoken to Schwabach and hoped he would drop a hint, but was afraid to take a direct step. Meanwhile The Times published its leader.1

On October 10, 1907, Metternich saw Grey on the matter. The Foreign Secretary once more regretted his powerlessness to control *The Times*, and emphasized his wish that the article had not been written. The Liberal journals, *The Westminster Gazette* and *The Tribune*, felt the moment had come to attack *The Times*. Their articles had a good reception in Berlin, and the *Kölnische Zeitung* reminded its readers that whereas "on the Continent *The Times* is regarded as being the leading newspaper in Great Britain, and a true mirror of British public opinion, in England *The Times* is by no means regarded in this manner. There it is appreciated that *The Times* represents the views of a small group of unimportant persons whose opinions,

<sup>1</sup> G. and T. VI, Nos. 50, 51.

# ACCORD WITH RUSSIA

however, "have no weight in current politics." But *The Times* considered it possessed sound reasons for its critical attitude towards Bülow. The paper was consistent in drawing a distinction between the Emperor and the Wilhelmstrasse.

Its articles, and the international polemics of which they were part, increased anxiety in many quarters. The consistent pressure of peace movements all over the world, backed by the personal interest of Czar Nicholas II, brought together another meeting at The Hague. It was hoped that the German Emperor would support the second peace conference, which began in June and occupied the summer and autumn months. The deliberations, it was found, did not forward British policy. A fortnight before the Conference rose Britain found herself with the support only of Portugal, Spain and Japan. To Germany, Austria and Italy there adhered Greece. Roumania and Belgium. The Germans led by Baron Marschall von Bieberstein had played well for their side. According to Eyre Crowe, Marschall was so expert in working the Press that "Even Saunders of The Times is not proof against his tricks."2 But if in London for once in its career The Times was found unequal to Marschall's wiles, it was not the less criticized by Germans. In conversation with Grey on November 1, 1907, Metternich pointed out that The Times article on Bülow had been repudiated by the rest of the Press, and asked what objection there could be to the Chancellor's accompanying the Emperor. Grey answered that although The Times article was acknowledged by all to have been "premature, trying in tone, and unnecessary . . . it did not follow that if Prince Bülow had actually come to England nothing would have been said." In fact Bülow's coldness in defending Britain during the Boer War against German ill-will had not been forgotten; nor did King Edward ever take a Prime Minister with him and thus create the impression that his visits were of great political significance. Finally, though Metternich was not reminded of it, Bülow's trick, during his visit with the Kaiser in 1901, of encouraging Chamberlain to discuss an alliance and immediately upon his return repudiating interest in any arrangement had not been forgotten by his chief victim, Chamberlain. The Kaiser when he came was not attended by his Chancellor.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Metternich to the Wilhelmstrasse, October 10, 1907. (G.P. XXIV, 8168.) Grey to Lascelles, October 10, 1907 (G. and T. VI, No. 53), admitted to the Ambassador that he knew that if Bülow did come there would have been protests in The Times and other papers. Lascelles to Grey, October 14, 1907. (G. and T. VI, No. 54.) On the 17th Lascelles gave his opinion to Grey that the article in The Times was "mischievous—I am afraid intentionally so." The Kölnische's observation about the unimportance, &c., of the views of The Times was doubtless supplied by the Wilhelmstrasse Press Bureau. That Lascelles should repeat it to Grey shows that he had no bias against the Germans.

<sup>2</sup> Eyre Crowe, October 11, 1907, to W. G. Tyrrell, Private Secretary to Grey. (G. and T VIII, No. 254.)

#### GERMAN NAVAL EXPANSION

The day after the Kaiser left Windsor, the German Government announced their intention to replace battleships after 20 instead of 25 years. Such an announcement was regarded as, in the circumstances, provocative. The general attitude in the office towards the end of 1907 is well described in Chirol's letter to the Berlin assistant:

How is steam to be got up for the heavy taxation which the Navy bill involves without turning on the old pressure valves of Anglophobia, and if they are turned on, what becomes of the professions of undying friendship during the Windsor week, and what figures will our Spenders and Haldanes and the rest cut over here? Our policy is to sit tight and watch.

Your messages about the Navy estimates have been excellent, as also about the financial measures in store and the general economic situation, which is suspected on this side of being far more unsound than the Germans can afford to admit. The Polish question is also one to be watched carefully and reported on with as much amplitude as our space allows, but quite "objectively."

It was not thought in the office that any unsoundness in German finances would prevent her spending upon men and ships. There was no prospect of a naval arrangement of any kind with Germany. During 1907 Esterneaux of the Foreign Office convinced Saunders that Germany, as "eine aufsteigende Macht," would not listen to the idea. In the meantime Repington consistently followed the policy of advocating such military reforms as would prepare Britain to afford the fullest help at the decisive point and within the limits of time. He did so with all his energy and in spite of opposition of all kinds, including that of the Blue Water School. Admiral Fisher wrote to Lord Esher on September 12, 1907, that he "really can't understand Mr. Buckle giving him [Repington] his head in this way in the columns of The Times, but I suppose it 'catches on' and makes the flesh creep of the old women of both sexes."2 So far from being given his head by Buckle, Repington himself used to urge that he did not get adequate support from the Editor. He complained to Bell of both Buckle and Capper, writing on December 4, 1907, that "I am oppressed with the belief that both are not of my way of thinking on this subject and are what I call perverts on the whole subject of Blue Water doctrines." Beside "Blue Water" doctrine a domestic political issue complicated the situation. Although Repington joined with Lord Roberts in the campaign to prove that England

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chirol to Chilver, November 28, 1907. (V/339.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Fisher, Memoirs, p. 181.

# ACCORD WITH RUSSIA

was inadequately defended against possible invasion, he was not prepared to go the whole way in favour of conscription, and remained an ardent supporter of Haldane's voluntary schemes. He was throughout in close touch with him; so much so that he ceased to enjoy the entire confidence of some of the War Office extremists.1 Sir Henry Wilson, for example, came to view The Times correspondent with a very unfriendly eye, since he was inclined to place more value on the Navy than was usual among men of his school and their French friends.

Nevertheless, Repington's warm advocacy of military support for France was one of the reasons why Metternich described him as "one of the most dangerous and cleverest agitators against Germany." He was a tireless worker for the Committee of Defence, as Lord Esher testifies in his Journal of March 27, 1907. Repington put his case, and his mass of information, backed with carefully compiled detail, impressed most of the Committee except Sir John Fisher, who was full of wrath at the inquisitiveness of the Defence Committee regarding naval plans. Repington, by this time, had come into the open as the antagonist of the Fisherites; also of the optimistic school of fire-eaters. He complained to Bell of "Julian Corbett's rubbish about attacking the coasts of great Powers. . . . There is no quicker way of losing an army to no purpose than this particular class of tomfoolery, and I shall show in my next article what Moltke thought about it."2 Repington, however unfavourably viewed at the Admiralty, had no difficulty in keeping in close touch with valuable friends and sources in other departments and continued to urge in The Times the cause of full military preparedness. The political facts were against him, for a Liberal Government was expected to provide for social services. If conducive to that end, the Government should, so many party members urged, come to an agreement with Germany and thus avoid diverting money to the Army. The Navy was a different matter. Everybody was agreed that Britain could not afford to lose her supremacy at sea and the Government were regarded even by party members as slow in taking up the German challenge. The Times was not among those who shrank from the effort and the expense. The paper was so poverty-stricken and so harassed by strife among its proprietors that a less resolute attitude towards the German challenge would not have been surprising. Indeed, if certain influences among the small proprietors had prevailed, the policy of The Times towards Germany might have changed.

<sup>1</sup> See Repington's article "Foundations of Reform" in *The Times*, March 4, 1907 for the means at Haldane's disposal, *i.e.*, twenty-eight millions and voluntary service. "It is not Mr. Haldane but the nation which is on its trial."

2 See Repington's article of August 29, 1906.

# XVI

# THE TIMES FOR SALE

THEN, as has been seen, 1 Walter declined the scheme for the financial reconstruction of the property which Hooper and Jackson had put forward with Bell's support he was not greatly dismayed. He had made up his mind that their scheme had no chance of being accepted by the proprietors or approved by the Court. A new move, of which Hooper and Bell knew nothing, was one of the reasons for his dismissal of their scheme. The new move had been initiated, and was being forwarded, by Godfrey Walter. When, weeks later, Bell came to learn of its existence he saw at once that the section of the proprietors which hated Hooper and Jackson and all their "alien" works had persuaded the Walters to accept their view of the position. It was not difficult to see also that together with Hooper and Jackson, the Book Club and the Book War, the proprietors lumped Bell himself. That they should do this was a serious matter for Bell and was bound to raise for Walter, as for any other man in his position, very delicate questions of principle. At this time none of the proprietors who objected to the "alien" publications admitted that Bell deserved the principal credit for the continued publication of *The Times* during ten critical years. They saw only the conditions which brought The Times into such a position; they must be changed. The autocratic direction of the Chief Proprietor must cease; a change in the executive would also be beneficial. The change must, in their view, be made effective and "business-like." To these proprietors the Walter-Bell association must be broken. These were facts that Walter could not ignore. If the proprietors did not get their way they could, and very likely would, insist upon a public sale of the paper with all its disastrous results to the circulation and advertising revenue. There was, in addition, a considerable body of readers of The Times who urged in letters addressed to him strong objections to the book schemes and the vociferous advertisements in the paper which accompanied them.

At the same time, therefore, as Walter refused Bell and Hooper's scheme, he addressed himself, for the first time, to the task of forming "The Times, Limited," by approaching his own friends

<sup>1</sup> See supra, p. 459.

and acquaintances. His object was to prepare something which should be free from the objections that could be urged against the Bell-Hooper scheme and would provide the capital urgently required for carrying on the paper. So far as money was concerned he foresaw no serious difficulty. Among his own friends and acquaintances he felt sure of finding those who would be willing to put up a considerable sum of money if it were a question of preserving the historic character of The Times and preventing its control from passing from the family which had created and fostered it. Walter saw Lord Lansdowne. an old friend, and during the discussion some names were mentioned and introductions given. Lord Lansdowne himself saw, on Walter's behalf, Lord Rothschild and several other persons. Godfrey Walter conferred with Mr. Coward, member of a firm of solicitors and a personal friend, and Mr. Plender. the accountant, who already, thanks to Hooper's introduction. was fully acquainted with the figures. A new constitution for "The Times, Limited," was drafted.

Lord Rothschild, Lord Lansdowne, and others were shown the draft in due course and their approval was secured by November, 1907. It was agreed to proceed with arrangements made by the solicitors and the accountants to interest new subscribers. Both Coward and Plender believed that further subscriptions could be more confidently expected if an assurance were given that the future business management of The Times would be conducted upon new, modern, and efficient lines; and they were further agreed that the scheme would be received both by the proprietors and by the "City" with greater favour if Bell were to retire, along with Hooper and Jackson and their "alien" book schemes, and a new Managing Director of recognized experience were brought in. Accordingly, recourse was had to Sir Alexander Henderson, a man widely respected in the City and largely interested in the Standard and Daily Express, who agreed to look for some competent person to advise on the reorganization of the paper and the office generally. He suggested Cyril Arthur Pearson as the best man available. A meeting was thereupon arranged between Pearson and Godfrey Walter, who reported favourably to his brother at Bear Wood, and with his consent entered forthwith upon negotiations.

Coward saw Lord Rothschild again on November 15, taking with him the draft prospectus. Reporting to his brother, Godfrey wrote that Lord Rothschild "was pleased to approve, making only one small suggestion which is a good one. He considered that the cooperation of Henderson and Pearson would be of great



GODFREY WALTER

advantage to us. Sir E[rnest] C[assel] is to meet R[othschild] on Monday about this matter." Sir Ernest Cassel was one of those who, as he told Lord Esher, believed it necessary to reorganize the management of *The Times*. Sir Ernest was well acquainted with Bell; so was Rothschild. They knew that in high German circles he was regarded as responsible for maintaining Saunders in his position as Berlin Correspondent of *The Times*. The conversations with Godfrey Walter were taking place less than two years after the Kaiser had denounced *The Times* and Moberly Bell to Alfred Beit. The prospect of Bell's being dropped from the management was not disagreeable to pro-Germans.

The discussion had progressed sufficiently to justify the setting down of the heads of an agreement between Arthur Walter and Pearson. Mr. Plender's partner, Mr. Chevalier, drafted them and they were ready on December 12, 1907. Upon examination the main principles appeared to be acceptable in Walter's view; moreover, it was likely that they would satisfy the proprietors whose consent, in any case, was a necessary preliminary to the final incorporation of "The Times, Limited." It was specified in the present articles that, notwithstanding a reorganization of the management, The Times would not be changed in character. The holdings of the proprietors would be equitably converted and the rates of income of the Walters as proprietors, printers, and landlords be guaranteed at a figure not less than they had been enjoying under the partnership. The principles of the scheme thus finally agreed on both sides, instructions were given to the solicitors and the accountants to proceed with the task of arranging the details. On January 1, 1908, a printed memorandum of agreement between Walter and Pearson, and Chevalier on behalf of the accountants, set forth the details and was ready for signature. It was, of course, of a provisional character and could possess no validity without the consent of the proprietors and the Court.

The recitals of this memorandum included the statement that Pearson possessed the Ordinary Shares in The Daily Express, Limited, and the Deferred and Ordinary Shares in The Standard Newspapers, Limited. Pearson undertook that his companies had ordinary liquid assets equal to their current liabilities and, between them, additional working capital of £20,000; that all these assets with the goodwill of *The Times*, the printing business, and other assets in connexion therewith owned by the Walters, should be transferred to a new company. The capital was to be £850,000, and the price to be paid by the new company for the Pearson holdings was to be £150,000 in Ordinary Shares.

The Board of the new company was to consist of A. F. Walter, C. A. Pearson, Godfrey Walter, John Walter, Edward Johnstone, with two others nominated by A. F. Walter and two others nominated by C. A. Pearson. It was agreed that so long as a member of the Walter family was on the Board he should be chairman. The proposals as to management gave Pearson authority subject to the Board to manage and superintend the printing and production of *The Times* and the control of expenditure in all departments of the paper. There was a rider:

The character of *The Times* shall not be changed and its prestige and position as an independent organ shall be preserved and maintained and . . . the political direction of and the appointment of the more important members of the staff of the Company shall, subject to the absolute control of the Board, be vested in the said Arthur Fraser Walter and the said Cyril Arthur Pearson including the following viz.: Editor, Assistant Editor, Foreign Editor, City Editor, Principal Leader Writers, Correspondents in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg, New York, Ottawa, Sydney, and Melbourne.

The managing staff was to be headed by Pearson, who was to receive a salary of £2,500 a year and commissions upon profits after certain deductions had been made. His colleagues were to consist of Godfrey Walter, to "be employed as a manager of The Times business at a salary of £1,000 per annum in addition to his fees as a director"; John Walter, "manager and treasurer of The Times at a salary of £500 per annum in addition to his fees as a director," and Edward Henderson Johnstone (Pearson's brother-in-law), to be "employed as a manager of The Times at a salary of £500 per annum in addition to his fees as a director." It was understood, however, that all these salaries were to be paid out of profits after the payment of the dividend upon the First Preference Shares; and that out of such profits an "extra cumulative sum of £4,000" should be paid to Arthur Walter under a new lease, to be granted for twenty-one years, of the premises of Printing House Square, for which, in addition and as a fixed charge, a rent of £4,000 per annum was to be paid.

The memorandum of agreement was signed on Wednesday, January 1, 1908. It was necessarily kept secret from Dr. Sibley, Miss Brodie-Hall and from all the other proprietors as well as from Buckle and Bell. Bell as it happened had that day gone off

<sup>1</sup> One of Pearson's nominations was Lord Esher. "I had a letter from Pearson, asking to see me. He wanted two things. First, that I should arrange the dispute between The Times and [John] Murray [the publisher]; second, that I should accept a seat on the new Board of The Times. He explained all the financial arrangements of the paper. . . I declined a seat on the Board, but I saw Murray, and he is to let me have soon a form of apology which he will accept." (Esher Journals, January 8, 1908.)

# A PARAGRAPH IN THE OBSERVER

to Calais to meet a daughter returning from India and was not due back until Monday.

On the intervening Sunday morning, January 5, 1908, readers of the *Observer*, Buckle and Bell amongst them, were mildly surprised to read the following:

It is understood that important negotiations are taking place which will place the direction of *The Times* newspaper in the hands of a very capable proprietor of several popular magazines and newspapers.

The publication of this paragraph in the *Observer*, controlled since 1905 by Sir Alfred Harmsworth and edited since 1907 by Mr. J. L. Garvin, was widely regarded as absolute proof that Harmsworth himself was the "capable proprietor of several popular magazines and newspapers" referred to. Buckle held an opposite opinion: he regarded it as a vicious but vain and foolish effort on Harmsworth's part to damage *The Times*. On Sunday night he sent the cutting, as he said in a note, to amuse Walter, who was unlikely to see the Sunday Press. Buckle had to send it to Bear Wood, where Walter had just been overtaken by influenza. Nothing was known by Buckle or Bell and the matter could be allowed to drop.

But on the morning of Monday the 6th, Godfrey Walter came to Buckle's room. The effect of the *Observer* paragraph upon him had been immediate and Godfrey told the Editor how he had at once sought Coward's advice; and, as he recommended an announcement in *The Times* without delay, they sat down together to consider the text. Godfrey explained to the astonished Buckle first that it was necessary to assure the proprietors and the public that the Walters had ready a scheme which owed nothing whatever to Harmsworth. He proceeded to outline the arrangements and the considerations that led to their being made. He followed up this account of the situation as it rested on that Monday morning with the production of the statement drafted by himself and the solicitors.

Buckle, who had absorbed the old Printing House Square tradition that a Walter was the only person connected with *The Times* whose name could properly be mentioned in the paper, hated the idea of printing a name connected with other newspapers. Godfrey Walter, however, insisted that the *Observer* paragraph pointed to Harmsworth; that any such connexion, or suggestion of it, must be so damaging at a time when, as he now admitted, arrangements were being made in the City for the paper's future, that a contradiction, and that immediate,

was absolutely necessary. Consequently it must go in *The Times* of Tuesday (*i.e.*, be put into type that Monday night). The Editor did his utmost to persuade Godfrey Walter to keep names out of the statement. But, he was answered, the matter needed to be sent to the printer as drafted and, later in the day, Buckle saw a proof of the final text as passed by Godfrey Walter:

Negotiations are in progress whereby it is contemplated that *The Times* newspaper shall be formed into a limited company under the proposed chairmanship of Mr. Walter.

The newspaper, as heretofore, will be published at Printing House

Square.

The business management will be reorganized by Mr. C. Arthur Pearson, the proposed managing director.

The editorial character of the paper will remain unchanged, and will be conducted, as in the past, on lines independent of party politics.

The contemplated arrangements will in all probability require the sanction of the Court before they become definitive.

The Editor had now no opportunity to consult before the paragraph went forward to the printer. Bell was not due in the office until too late that evening. Buckle therefore expressed himself frankly to Walter at Bear Wood. "It seems to me," he wrote, "uncertain whether the advantage, which Pearson's experience of the newspaper business will bring to the management of the paper, may not be outweighed by his association in the public mind with a Press of very different aims and ideals. In other words, though I trust his policy may help us, I fear his name will do us harm." Buckle added that he knew him only slightly, but had never found him specially sympathetic. Finally the Editor expressed his disappointment that a fundamental change in the ownership and management of the paper had been decided upon without one preliminary word to himself. Walter's reply hardly satisfied Buckle:

Bear Wood, Wokingham.

Jan. 9, 1908.

My dear Buckle,

Nothing could be more unfortunate for the moment than my being laid up here: but I must do what I can to allay your anxiety until I see you. Come down on Saturday evening if possible, and I will tell you all about the matter.

I should have thought, however, that Godfrey would have assured you of this much: first, that your position will be in no way or degree affected: secondly, that what is being done is practically forced upon us in default of any alternative means of saving the Paper. You must be content with these assurances for the moment, as I am not equal to going into the whole story.

# THE "PEARSON" SCHEME

One word more. I was longing to take you into my confidence, and should have done so at the earliest possible moment. But the indiscreet, the breakers of confidence and the newspaper bluebottles were too much for me.

Yours very truly,

A. F. WALTER

Another consequence of the Observer paragraph was the dispatch of a "Private and Confidential" circular from Walter to the proprietors. Dated January 9, it bears the marks of Messrs. Soames's hurried draughtsmanship, and was probably begun on Monday the 6th. It informs the proprietors that "Some of the leading men in the country have been consulted and the best independent expert advice obtained in the making of the new arrangement for the carrying on of the paper which will, I venture to think, commend themselves to you and justify you in giving your adhesion." The necessity of finding new capital being evident, "a few people of very high position in the country who represent all shades of political opinion" thinking it would be "in the nature of national disaster" if the paper fell into the hands of those who failed to maintain its prestige, "agreed to subscribe the necessary Capital with a view to place the paper upon a sound financial footing." It was "also necessary to remodel the business management of the paper" and this and other arrangements contemplated would be under the direction of a Board "which will include two independent persons of recognized position and standing, one of whom will be Sir Edward Tennant. one of the present Proprietors of The Times." As to the management, "The number of persons competent to undertake the business management of such a concern is limited, but with the concurrence of the cash contributors the necessary arrangements have been made with Mr. C. Arthur Pearson." The proposed capitalization of the company was fully set out; and finally, it was regretted that

a rumour to which publicity was prematurely given necessitated our announcement in *The Times* before it was possible to place the scheme before you. As a result of this premature announcement many of the Proprietors sought information. I am glad to be able to assure the recipients of the circular that Proprietors representing more than half of the ownership of the paper have expressed their "unqualified assent."

No reference, it should be observed, was made either to the *Daily Express* or to the *Standard*; none was made in the announcement of January 7; and none was made in conversation with Buckle. Almost everything, however, that could be said for the

scheme hinged upon the financial situation of these journals. The "City" may have been right in considering the fabric of *The Times* to be antiquated; correct also in thinking that Pearson was experienced and, in a sense, an expert in modern newspaper management. It went without saying, too, that Walter made no pretensions to be a newspaper manager and Godfrey Walter regarded himself only as an efficient, if conservative, printer of *The Times* upon a non-competitive hereditary basis. As the two Walters necessarily sought new capital, so the new capitalists reasonably sought the views of trusted advisers. The financiers' acceptance of Pearson was, in the circumstances, not at all an imprudent course. When presented, the prospectus was in the financial view likely to be impressive, backed as it was by Henderson, Rothschild and others.

Nevertheless, the financial situation of the Pearson press in January, 1908, did not, in itself warrant the conviction, in the City or anywhere else, that he was so successful with other newspapers that he was bound to make a success of The Times. or that he was so good an organizer that the task of bringing those newspapers into Printing House Square would be, for him. an easy matter. The combined figures for the Standard and the Daily Express for the last year, ended June 30, 1907, showed indeed a profit of £33,000. The Daily Express had increased its circulation since July 1, 1907, and the gain was thought sufficiently permanent to justify an increased rate in its scale of advertisement charges. The increase, which however had not been announced in December, 1907, was expected to produce a gross increased annual profit of £15,000 but subject to commissions. The circulation of the Standard was admitted to be decreasing; the paper, in the view of the auditors, was "not showing any indication of an increase of income." Fleet Street rumour had it that the Standard was nearing a crisis. Nevertheless with certain economies which would be effective when both papers were taken to P.H.S., the combined profit, it was estimated, should not be less than £51,500; and The Times would benefit by the reduced cost of telegrams, &c., since it was proposed to divide that expense between the paper and the Standard.

To those outside the trade who possessed no knowledge of Pearson's ability as a newspaper manager, his nomination by the City was to some extent reassuring. Actually the significance of that nomination lay in the great personal prestige of Sir Alexander Henderson. Neither the Walters nor their solicitors, accountants and financiers, thought that the principles of the scheme as a whole could be improved upon. Hence the great

majority of the proprietors would doubtless rally to Walter's circular of January 9, 1908, recommending its acceptance. A favourable result was confidently expected and the present and future of the ownership and management of *The Times* thus permanently provided for. But days, even a week or perhaps more, must elapse between the dispatch of Walter's circular of January 9 and the expression of the proprietors' conclusions upon it. It was a delay that had to be borne. In the meantime other opinions were available to the Walters. Whatever might turn out to be the public reception of the paragraph printed in *The Times* of January 7, and its authoritative statement that the business would in future be managed by Pearson, Buckle's adverse view had at once been expressed in writing.

When, too, at a late hour on the night before the publication of Godfrey Walter's statement, Bell saw a proof, he forthwith seized his pen and wrote to the Chief Proprietor, with whom he had now been on terms of intimacy for upwards of twenty years. "Forgive me" he wrote, "if I say that I cannot help feeling deeply hurt at the want of confidence you have shown in one who has tried to serve you faithfully and who regarded you as a friend." Bell, indeed, was thunderstruck by the intervention of Pearson. Only a week or two earlier, rumour had reached him that the *Standard* had been spoken of in Fleet Street, and other places where men talked, as in danger of closing down. The profits of Pearson's other properties were, naturally, not known.

In the twenty-four hours following his return, Bell learnt that there was something moving in the City and that the Walters were connected with it. Arthur Walter was still at Bear Wood and Bell knew he could expect nothing from Godfrey. On the morning of Friday, January 10, Bell had a telephone call from the Rothschilds and at their request went to New Court. He gave them openly, and not as a matter of confidence, his negative judgment upon the "Pearson" scheme. As to any alternative, Bell received the impression that Rothschild was anxious to do all he could to help The Times. Almost immediately following Bell, Coward arrived and, as one of its authors, he was given an opportunity to expound the scheme and to answer some of the objections which Bell had urged upon Rothschild. Coward also left with the impression that the Rothschilds were anxious to do everything they could to assist The Times. Shortly after Bell's return to the office, he was visited by Godfrey Walter, to whom, also, he gave his candid view of the "Pearson" scheme. The resulting exchanges of opinion were stormy. "I told Bell," Godfrey Walter reported that evening to his brother still sick at Bear Wood, "that he had no business to talk to people about this matter of which he knew nothing . . . the sooner Bell is out of the place the better." Bell, for his part, had broken off the interview with his mind absolutely made up to trump the "Pearson" scheme. But he had no idea how to do it on the night of January 10. He worked day and night for a week, only to exhaust all his ideas.

Meanwhile the public attitude towards the announcement in The Times of January 7 did not turn out to be as discouraging as Buckle, Bell, and others expected—and hoped. The Westminster Gazette complained only that as Pearson was acting in association with Sir Alexander Henderson, The Times would hardly remain "unchanged" or "independent of party lines" as promised by the authorized announcement. Pearson promptly wrote to the Liberal journal:

To the Editor of the Westminster Gazette Dear Sir.

In yesterday's Westminster Gazette you said that in the matter of The Times I am acting "for a party of wealthy Tariff Reformers."

Will you allow me space in which to state that this is not the fact? I am not acting on behalf of a party of Tariff Reformers, or on behalf of any other party, association, or committee.

Yours faithfully.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON.

Other reactions, also from respectable quarters, were cordial. Mr. St. Loe Strachey of the Spectator wrote "a particularly nice letter" to Pearson, who was able to inform John Walter that he had received congratulations from sources which would balance any protests his Father had received or would receive. On the 13th Pearson wrote to Walter as follows:

My dear Mr. Walter,

I feel that I should have written before to tell you how sorry I am that you are indisposed, but I have been overwhelmed with correspondence. I am glad to gather from your son [John Walter] that you are now better, and I trust that you may be quite yourself again in a very few days.

Things seem to be going quite as well as could be expected with

regard to the Proprietors.

I trust that I was able this afternoon to tell your son some things that will reassure you. It is inevitable that you should receive disquieting communications just at the moment. I wonder greatly that they have not been more numerous and I have been amazed at the generally friendly tone of press and public alike.



Pearson as Managing Director of The Times Publishing Co. Ltd. Reproduced by permission of the Proprietors of *Punch* 

#### THE OPTIMISM OF PEARSON

When I took over the management of the Standard, the papers were most uncomplimentary and I received—without exaggeration—thousands of letters from people who disapproved. Now I have not had one, and I understand that very few have come to *The Times*.

On the other hand I have received charming letters from a number of people distinguished in almost every walk of life.

Everything will go well I am assured.

With kind regards, Yours sincerely,

C. ARTHUR PEARSON.

On the same January 13 a meeting was held at P.H.S. of the group of proprietors. It was the first of a number of meetings at which the proprietors, grouped according to their personal sympathies, were to learn the details of the scheme as promised in Walter's circular of January 9. Accordingly Miss Brodie-Hall and her party now attended at the office. In the continued absence of Walter, his son John acted as chairman. When the "Pearson" scheme was expounded by Mr. Plender and by Mr. Coward it encountered much less opposition than had been expected. John Walter, too, had in the meantime seen Chirol. to whom he gave authority to convey to Steed and other principal foreign correspondents John Walter's personal "hope and belief that nothing would be done to alter the position" of the Foreign Department and agencies abroad. John Walter had also seen Chisholm (who had left his position as chief leader-writer on the Standard to come to P.H.S.) and had solid grounds for believing that he and others were satisfied with the position regarding the political direction of The Times upon which Walter and Pearson had agreed. Miss Brodie-Hall and her friends listened to John Walter's report, and owing to his father's illness at Bear Wood the plaintiffs agreed to adjourn for some days their summons on the matter of the Hooper and Jackson advertising contract and agreed to await the printed prospectus.

Walter, encouraged, took it that the critics would forget their objections when they saw the exact terms and knew that no change would be made in the character of the paper. He consequently assured Pearson that for his part he could afford to ignore the opposition and believed that the majority of the proprietors would justify him. A meeting was called by Soames for January 20. Meanwhile, on the 15th, Godfrey Walter, who, with the assistance of Coward, had been interviewing the proprietors singly, was able to report the good news that some three-quarters of the whole were already "consenting." With the adhesion of Soames's group of clients it was hoped that the number of consentients would increase predominantly. Opposi-

tion from Miss Brodie-Hall was confidently discounted by Godfrey Walter as so much "bounce." The "Pearson" scheme, it was thought, was not attracting anything like the volume of criticism prophesied by Buckle. When on the 16th, a rumour came to Godfrey Walter's ears that Bell and Hooper were intriguing for the support of W. W. Astor he was certain, as he reported to Walter, that "nothing could come of any American scheme." Later rumours to the effect that Hooper was negotiating with other people were similarly disregarded. It was admitted, however, that he was in a strong position as he possessed most of the details of the proprietary, of the business, access to Bell's confidence and, in addition, a cash claim against the partnership. Pearson's mind was easy, provided it was understood that nothing was to be gained by suddenly upsetting Hooper and Jackson. It was confidently expected that the entire crisis would be over on the 20th.

The "Pearson" scheme being as good as settled, the man himself was actively engaged in dealing with outstanding business. He was in close touch with John Walter and at once shouldered the burden of interviewing not only Hooper and his partner, Jackson. but the publishers alienated by Book Club methods. It was necessary to get this controversy out of the way; in any case its liquidation would count in his favour with the proprietors. While they, Pearson entertained little doubt, would be almost unanimous in favour of the scheme, it was well to make sure. John Walter, who had been chairman at the last meeting at P.H.S.. emphasized to Pearson, and, as the latter was disposed to imagine, exaggerated, the power for mischief of certain of the proprietors. John Walter held the view that, despite careful preparation, some of the proprietors who were anti-Walter on principle could not be conciliated before the date when the Brodie-Hall summons to set aside the Hooper and Jackson contract was due to be returnable. "We heard this morning," John Walter told his father on the 11th, "that both Willis [Solicitor to many small proprietors] and Sharp [Solicitor to Miss Brodie-Hall] are hostile and mean to be as nasty as they can be."

Three days later, on the afternoon of January 14, John Walter went into consultation with Warmington as Counsel. John Walter afterwards gave his father the opinion that "we seem to be right in the middle of the wood, but don't seem to see any daylight ahead at present." Others, however, continued optimistically and Walter himself saw no need to alter his estimate of the probability of success. On the following day Pearson wrote thus, in his own hand:

# PEARSON CONCILIATES THE PUBLISHERS

My dear Mr. Walter,

January the fifteenth 1908.

Thank you for your letter. I felt sure you would take the sensible view of matters in their present stage which you do take. Personally I think it is wonderful that the many folk to whom I must have given offence in the past, particularly in the political way, have not made more fuss.

It is indeed a great drawback that you have to be away at the moment, but I have always held that health is the first consideration, and it would be very unwise for you to take any risks.

I think so far as the matters before the Court are concerned you can quite safely leave yourself in the hands of Coward, who is working very hard to straighten things out.

I hope we shall not have much trouble with Hooper and Jackson. Jackson came round to see me yesterday afternoon and I had a long talk with him. He says that they wish to sever their connection with *The Times* as rapidly as possible, and that they do not want to cause any trouble, all they require being that a financial basis of settlement shall be arrived at. This I told him I was sure would be gone along with at once, and I mentioned the matter to Chevalier [the Accountant] this morning, and he is going to do whatever is necessary to expedite affairs.

I am very glad to hear your views as to the importance of running no risk of an open break with Hooper and Jackson. They are in a position, both with regard to the Book Club and to the Advertising Department, of making themselves excessively disagreeable. In fact so far as these two most important departments are concerned they can really hang things up entirely for six months if they choose. They are very busy over their new book and I feel sure have no desire to fight. Jackson made a great point that the History of the World¹ shall receive every possible assistance from The Times Book Club and I have told him that this shall be done. Obviously as it is a publication of The Times we must do what we can to help it.

I have today had an informal talk with some of the leading publishers with regard to the Book controversy. There were present besides myself, Mr. Johnstone and Mr. Malcolm Fraser, Messrs. Richard Bell, Reginald Smith, G. Longman, John Murray, William Heinemann and Frederick Macmillan. They are quite willing to come to an arrangement, and I do not think there is likely to be any difficulty in settling matters. Their principal feeling is one of bitter personal enmity against Hooper and Moberly Bell, whom they consider have treated them both unfairly and insultingly. The talk, as I have said, was a purely informal one. I met them as a member of the Publishers Association myself, and not as being connected with the management of *The Times*. I thought this a good way of clearing the air and getting at the feelings of all concerned.

C. ARTHUR PEARSON.

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<sup>1</sup> The Historians' History of the World, published by The Times in association with Hooper and Jackson.

The matter being thus sure and with Walter still under the doctor, Godfrey Walter was appointed to bring the affair to the legal climax.

Accordingly on the 15th a summons, taken out by Coward, ordered the parties in the action, Sibley v. Walter, to attend in Justice Warrington's Chambers on the 17th. The business was to hear an application that the sale directed on July 31, 1907, be carried into effect according to the schedule "annexed," i.e., a print of the Memorandum of Agreement signed by Walter and Pearson on January 3, 1908. Although the print was in summary form, care was taken to include the article intended to safeguard the character of *The Times*, which had been drafted by Walter and Pearson:

The persons who have agreed to subscribe for the first Preference Shares of the Company have so agreed at the instance of the said Arthur Fraser Walter, and with the desire to assist in maintaining the prestige of *The Times* as a paper of the highest tone and character seeking to uphold the British Constitution [blank] and [blank] accordingly, this Memorandum and Articles of Association shall embody the necessary clauses to express these provisions as a fundamental principle of the Constitution of the Company.

The print was circulated and the proprietors ordered to give their consideration to its provisions during the stay of two months, *i.e.*, to March 15, 1908, granted by the Court.

Five days later, on Monday, January 20, a meeting of proprietors was held at Soames's office. The attendance, though slight in numbers, comprised the owners of the largest shares, *i.e.*, Godfrey Walter and General Sterling, with half a dozen smaller proprietors. They had assembled to hear Mr. Plender make a fuller statement than had been made to the Brodie-Hall group a week earlier. After rehearsing the familiar facts that *The Times* could not go on if it had liabilities that it could not meet, that a large sum of money for working capital was required, and that the character of the paper made it desirable to collect the money from private sources, Mr. Plender announced that:

Out of the £200,000 proposed cash capital we have had already promised us £185,000 by Lord Strathcona, Lord Mountstephen, Sir Edward Tennant, Lord Rothschild, Sir Andrew Noble, Lord Salisbury, Lord Iveagh, and other gentlemen of position who desire to see *The Times* newspaper maintained.

Having thus secured the required cash, we then considered the position of *The Times* Proprietors, and the Messrs. Walter as owners of the printing business.

# THE TIMES, THE STANDARD AND THE DAILY EXPRESS

The Times unfortunately at the moment is being carried on at a loss, and unless the management is entirely re-arranged I see no prospect of any return to prosperous conditions. It was necessary to consult someone and to bring the most suitable person available into any arrangement, and after much consideration it was thought that Mr. Pearson, on the whole, was the best and most experienced man to be associated with the reorganization of the paper.

Proceeding, Mr. Plender stated that £260,000 had been fixed as the value of The Times, which was "far in excess of what would be paid for it as an ordinary commercial venture." This sum represented sixteen years' purchase of the average profits of the past seven years, including the special receipts from the Encyclonaedia, &c. It was proposed to pay a six per cent, dividend upon this category of stock, equalling an annual sum of £15,600; also five per cent. upon the new money. The proprietors were also offered ten per cent. in addition after the payment of the two Preference dividends, directors' fees, &c., and the placing of £10,000 to reserve. The printing plant in the Walters' office was valued at £90,000 by Messrs. Edwin Fox and Bousfield and it was proposed to sell it to the company for Second Preference Shares to that amount. For the future they were to allocate their profits from printing The Times, which, it was now for the first time revealed, averaged £32,000 a year, as a sum henceforth to rank as a "fund for the protection of the six per cent. dividend for the proprietors." Accordingly it was proposed to compensate the Walters for giving up the profit "that for generations they have derived from the Printing Business" by giving them Ordinary Shares to the amount of £150,000, the dividend upon which was deferred. It was hoped to placate the bitterest critics (who, however, were absent) of the Walters by pointing out that the proprietors would be paid not only their six per cent. but their ten per cent. as a surplus profit before the Walters could be paid any dividend upon their Ordinary Shares. Mr. Plender next explained that the company's assets under the scheme would include the balance of profit, after paying fixed charges, upon the Standard and Evening Standard and the Daily Express, which Mr. Pearson estimated at £11,000 for the year 1907. This sum represents what is expected to pass to the Ordinary and Deferred Shares of the Companies owning those Newspapers which The Times Company will acquire. There are certain prior charges on the Standard in the shape of Debentures and Preference Shares. Those are proposed to be left undisturbed; Mr. Pearson and other gentlemen who hold Ordinary and Deferred Shares in those Newspapers will transfer them to The Times Company and The Times Company will receive the balance available for dividend upon those Shares.

In addition to those two sources of income, savings are expected to be effected in the management of the Book Club, and also in the reorganization of the business management of *The Times*.

As for Pearson's holdings in the two Standards and the Express, Mr. Plender proposed that he too should be paid by £150,000 Ordinary Shares, to rank pari passu with the Walters'. His payment "as Manager" was deferred until the payment of the dividend upon both First and Second Preference Shares.

The meeting naturally dispersed to give further consideration to Mr. Plender's announcement. Neither Dr. Sibley nor Miss Brodie-Hall had been present. They would certainly not have understood the offer to the Walters of £150,000 Ordinary Shares in exchange for their right to profit by printing *The Times*. That the Walters should ever have profited to the extent of an average yearly sum of £32,000 was a revelation that was bound to renew their opposition and probably to extend it among the ranks of the proprietary. It was an aspect of the affair that could hardly be lost sight of by those interested, or who could be induced to become interested, in the future financing of Printing House Square. General Sterling, the largest single holder after Godfrey Walter and Arthur Walter, would express no opinion upon the scheme as a whole until he had seen his friends.

For some days no additional step was taken, but the state of effervescence among the proprietors continued. On January 19 Miss Brodie-Hall's solicitors circulated a draft of a new scheme which valued *The Times* newspaper at £520,000—a much larger sum than had yet been suggested, double that in Bell and Hooper's scheme. A portion of the new capital was very new: its principal source, Miss Brodie-Hall's friends of the Wiener Bankverein, was not disclosed by Messrs. Sharp and Benest her solicitors, but it may have been intended to do so at the meeting they called for the 27th.

On the 25th Walter posted a statement criticizing the Brodie-Hall scheme as "chimerical." He gave it as his opinion that no useful object would be served by attending their meeting and affirmed that he was quite ready to consider any reasonable criticisms of his own scheme advanced by anyone, "although I think it would be best to leave it to the Judge to decide." In reply to this latest circular Walter received a discouraging reply from General Sterling:

There is clearly a dividing line of opinion between the extreme upholders of the just rights of the proprietors and the just rights of that portion of *The Times* property comprised generically under the

# OTHER, "CHIMERICAL" SCHEMES

head of printing and publishing. Cannot we come to some modified terms and avoid the ghastly legal expenses which are being incurred? More pertinently he proceeded to say that

As for myself I know nothing of Pearson, but I find a very strong opinion against his general political views, but a high regard for his business capabilities.

Let me know if you will see me or if you prefer to hold aloof, in which case I must look after myself but with regret.

There was, he thought, no vital urgency. The scheme sworn to in the affidavit of Godfrey Walter on January 20 with the request that it should be carried through "without delay as it is absolutely necessary that care shall be taken in order that the newspaper may be continued "was, nevertheless, ordered to lie during an interval of three months-for Walter and Pearson and The Times a dangerously long period. The finances of the paper required a rapid solution of the entire constitutional and financial problem; but, in addition, delay encouraged the drafting by all sorts of people of what Walter called "chimerical" schemes. There was, assuredly, ample margin for the exercise of legal skill. Mercifully, it was also ordered that evidence in support and in opposition must be filed by January 30. Nobody, however, knew whether, at the end of the stay, the Judge would take into consideration the number of proprietors and order the sale according to the consent of the majority, or in what that majority would consist; whether, and to what extent, he would be guided by the amount of the holder's share; and whether, in the case of hopeless disagreement, he would consider the Pearson or some other scheme as yet undisclosed upon its merits; whether, if satisfied that it did justice to the several interests involved, order its acceptance; or, finally, to what extent the sale would be determined by the purchaser's ability to pay in shares or whether cash would be insisted upon.

It seemed improbable that the Judge would overrule the objections of those who, as individuals, had most to lose. The proprietor whose family had refrained from sub-dividing shares might therefore be of greater importance than a large number of owners of tiny fractions, such as the one-half of one-ninth of two-sixteenths which Miss Wilhelmina Brodie-Hall possessed or the one-seventh of one-third of one-fifth of three sixteenths which Dr. Walter Knowsley Sibley possessed. The sixteenth share which the second John Walter had sold to Edward Sterling in 1819 had descended to his grandson, General John Barton Sterling, as to seven-twelfths, and he was Trustee for another fraction. He was, it has been seen, the most important owner

after the family. It was clearly important to secure his support especially when it was known that Miss Brodie-Hall was urging her scheme. It has been seen that General Sterling had attended the meeting on January 20 at Soames's; he had since been visited once by Godfrey Walter and again by John Walter. They still regarded him as doubtful. Outside proprietorial circles criticism of the proposal was growing. The "Pearson" scheme, which originally had been talked about privately, had now been discreetly discussed in the Carlton Club. On January 29, a valued friend wrote from that address informing Walter that "we do not want to see The Times trampled in the dirt by the men of the Tit-Bits school." The effect of Harmsworth's congratulations in the Daily Mail was now seen to be bad.1 The use of the word "we" seemed to hint that opposition to Pearson was being organized. Some notable withdrawals of support did. in fact, follow; and then there was a pause. It was not enough. perhaps, to draft articles for incorporation in the Articles of Association if the powers to be given to the new managing director were unrestricted; in particular to such a man as Pearson was in some quarters represented to be. If Pearson was the record "hustler," as Joseph Chamberlain liked to describe him, it might be of value to the paper, but if he was not of The Times "class" it might be very dangerous.

During all these negotiations, Bell, whose range of political friends was more extensive than that of anybody in the office, remained curiously silent. He spent more time outside the office than usual but it did not appear that he did anything else but talk to Jackson—probably, it was thought, about the History of the World.

On January 31 Buckle surprised Walter. He said that having seen a great many persons of influence, "I am in a position to say that Balfour, Lansdowne, the Chamberlains (Joe and Austen), Curzon, Edward Grey and Morley, besides a crowd of lesser personages, are all agreed in deploring and strongly deprecating the introduction of Pearson." If this were not sufficient, Buckle reminded Walter of the information that had come through Bell that "the French Ambassador here and the French Government share the feeling; and Capper tells us the same story of [Theodore] Roosevelt and [Elihu] Root." Bell had evidently not been as idle since the first week of January as he had been silent. Buckle, with Bell at his side, but without naming him, proceeded to implore Walter "to withdraw from the engagement if you honourably

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For Sir Alfred Harmsworth's tribute to Pearson printed in the Daily Mail of January 7 see infra, pp. 532-3.

# THE "PEARSON" SCHEME IN DANGER

can." But matters had gone too far; what Walter could, or could not do, now depended upon Pearson—and the proprietors. At the end of the month, the extent of consent among them still remaining only a guess, Walter believed the majority to desire his scheme. He was probably correct, and had the "Pearson" scheme come before the Court on February 1, the prospects of success would have been much more than fair. And the prospect remained fair for some days. On February 4, however, General Sterling communicated his decision:

Dear Walter,

I have given formal notice to Mr. Chevalier that personally and as Trustee I withdraw my support from the scheme of the 9th January.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN STERLING.

This was alarming. If Sterling withdrew, it was doubtless in order to give his support elsewhere—perhaps to the Brodie-Hall scheme, designed, it had now become obvious, to end the Walter control.

A second blow fell a day or two later. On the 7th Sir Edward Tennant withdrew. He wrote making it clear that his action was not due only to his own personal sense of Pearson's unfitness but, what was far worse, to his knowledge that this view was commonly held. He said, tacitly confirming what Buckle, Bell, and others in the office had from the beginning asserted, that the "Pearson" scheme would not work and that there would be widespread public objection to *The Times* making such a connexion:

7 Feb. 1908.

My dear Walter,

I fear that I can no longer support the scheme for which I have hitherto worked. I feel that the appointment of Mr. Pearson would not effect the object which the proprietors desire. It is held on every hand that under the direction of Mr. Pearson *The Times* could not maintain the traditions of the past. I must ask you to withdraw my name from the Board and to give this resignation such publicity as you may think fit.

If I can help you under a new scheme I shall be really glad. We are both anxious for the future of *The Times* and I think that the greatest service I can do at present is to oppose the proposed agreement.

Believe me, Yours v. truly,

EDWARD P. TENNANT.

This letter, coming as it did on top of General Sterling's, shook the confidence of Arthur Walter and his brother in their choice of Pearson as "the man who would save *The Times*." They felt none the less bound to persevere since, apart from the fact that

they were already committed to Pearson, none of the critics of their scheme had as yet suggested a practicable alternative. They believed moreover, that the opposition to Pearson was largely due to rumours and intrigues set on foot by interested parties whose identity, at this time, could only be guessed at. The Walters, and Pearson, were aware that Sir Edward Tennant's statement that "under the direction of Mr. Pearson The Times could not maintain the traditions of the past" did more than record a personal impression; but they were not aware that it marked the successful climax of a campaign by the leading figures of The Times, Buckle, Chirol and others, which was conducted by Bell. From the first Bell had engaged in consultation with his closest friends in the office, Buckle and Chirol; outside the editorial office he also saw some old friends, principally Hooper. To him he spoke with complete frankness and ease, for Hooper knew the situation as intimately and could judge it as competently as Bell himself. Their association in the summer with the scheme Walter had refused, to their lasting regret, still united them. In addition, there was an aspect of the affair that was displeasing to both: Pearson was bound to be unsympathetic to the bookselling schemes and Hooper was naturally concerned for the fate of the Book Club. Hooper was also sorry for Bell personally.

The American's sympathy encouraged Bell to make up his mind that the chances of forming a company were not so remote that he ought to give up the attempt. The assistance of enlightened capitalists of his own choice, amenable in the highest degree, he now hoped, would render it possible for him to remain in charge. With new capital raised from his own selected sources, his own determination, and his own proved capacity to manage the business, the historic character of the paper would be safeguarded. By keeping the editor and other leading staff in their positions the safeguard would be made effective. Bell therefore continued to discuss matters with Hooper. Both realized that the implacable opposition of certain proprietors to bookselling schemes made the revival of their own scheme impossible and that in consequence Bell must look elsewhere for his main financial support. But it was not necessary to refuse other and indirect forms of support from him. Hooper, as disappointed as Bell, that their scheme had been refused by Walter, expressed himself as utterly opposed to Pearson. If Bell went, the whole book department went with him, and at this time Hooper and Jackson were on the verge of publishing, in association with the paper and by contract with it, The Historians' History of the World

# BELL'S INDEPENDENT SCHEME

in twenty-four volumes. Publication, on the instalment plan, was due to take place that March. Hooper, therefore, desiring to save his Book Club and his other connexions with The Times, the goodwill of whose name was an asset of his own business, was more than happy to exert himself to find support for Bell. That support, Bell stipulated, must come from sources untainted. Only so could there be any hopes of guaranteeing the independent character of the paper: it must also come from a source that was free from anything like the objections which he himself, Buckle, Chirol, Monypenny and others were urging against Pearson. Finally, any support had to be sufficient. The "City" view was known. It was little use going there for the money. It was equally impossible to extrude Pearson in favour of Newnes; it was right out of the question to suggest Harmsworth. They simply could not apply to "the Tit-Bits school."

Bell's first step was to seek out his friend Lord Cromer, a Free Trader, who, he thought, might rally a number of friends under his chairmanship. Difficulties immediately presented themselves. He next saw Henry Yates Thompson, also a Free Trader. The obstacles he here encountered made Bell realize that to upset the "Pearson" scheme would require every atom of his strength and resource. At this time sixty-one years of age, he had worked with all his energy, with practically no holidays for eighteen years, in the endeavour to maintain the position and character of The Times. The failure of Lord Cromer and others to assist was disappointing, for although Bell had many other friends they were, most of them, not very rich men. Sir Hugh Bell was seen as a possible help. Talk with him was followed by a further disappointment, and then he did not know to whom else to turn. Moberly Bell was quite sure that his own reputation was immense and guaranteed him interesting work elsewhere at his choice. If he should fail to interest sufficient new capital and Pearson came to Printing House Square he could go into partnership with Hooper in the publishing business and at a higher salary than The Times had ever been able to pay.

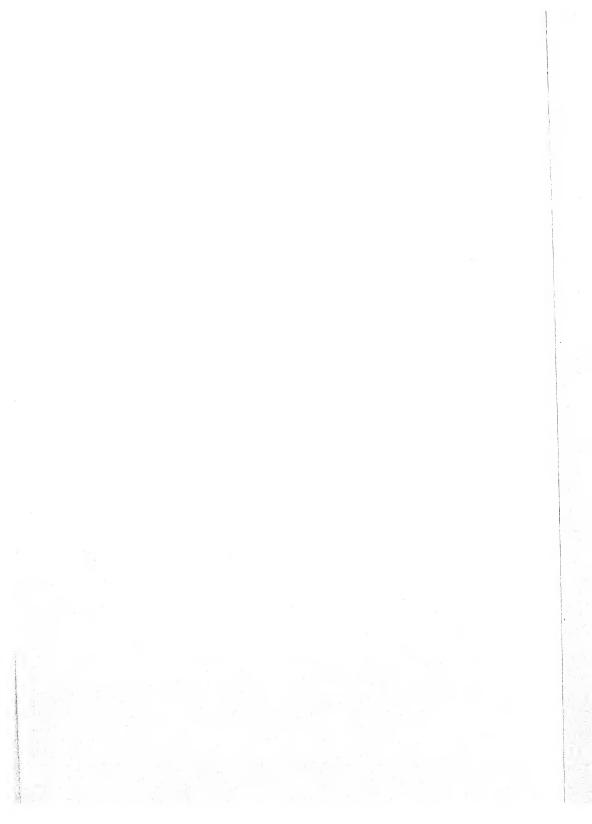
But this would never help *The Times*, and Bell put aside all such reflections. With unconscious egoism, he saw himself, perhaps alone in the truly effective sense, as understanding the paper both as a paper and as a business; and consequently as possessing, whether he liked it or not, a more complete responsibility for its existence and continuity than either the petty proprietors divided by jealousies and united only in their opposition to Walter, or Walter himself, whose habitual aloofness

and present failing health made him as unfit for fighting for the character of the paper, so Bell had persuaded himself, as for managing the finances of it. Thus, although disappointed in every quarter, Bell determined to go on. He had to go on, he felt, even when he got from Sir Hugh Bell, of all people, news of another scheme sponsored by Miss Brodie-Hall and already known to Walter. This was a surprise, but there was no knowing how many other surprises might not be contrived by persons interested in getting possession of the paper. Publicity, and there was now no lack of it, was bound to encourage every sort of scheme.

The original publicity in the Observer of January 5 which referred to The Times and the passing of its control into the hands of a well-known newspaper proprietor was due in the first place to pardonable boasting on the part of Pearson, and secondly to a piece of smart work on the part of Harmsworth's people. The chief of the Daily Mail was in Paris but his instructions were being obeyed by his deputies in London. For something like two months, as a matter of news interest, their orders had been to keep very careful watch upon The Times. No sooner had the provisional agreement been signed by Walter, Pearson and Chevalier than Pearson began talking of his triumph. It was a natural thing to do but it turned out to be the gravest of indiscretions. The agreement became known to Sir George Lewis, then in close professional relations with Carmelite House. On Friday morning, January 3, he passed on the fact that some agreement had been signed, as an item of news to George Sutton, Harmsworth's chief-of-staff. Sutton, having telegraphed the news to Harmsworth, was summoned to Paris for a conference that Friday night. From Paris the text of the Observer paragraph was wired by Sutton in time for Sunday's issue and he also wired instructions for Kennedy Jones to see Hooper and ascertain the facts and figures concerning The Times. In London, on Sunday, interviewers moved by the Observer paragraph endeavoured without success to "reach" Walter. The publication of the Observer paragraph excited the most intense curiosity in Fleet Street. Harmsworth, Newnes and Pearson were all sought by interviewers. The first was abroad; the second said he was not in the least interested in The Times; the third gave another example of his indiscretion. Pearson said he would rather make no statement even by way of contradiction, and then added the superfluous but meaningful statement that "There is absolutely nothing in it—but there may be some day." The promise of something "some day" naturally increased the publicity it was important to minimize. A paragraph to the effect that Pearson



KENNEDY JONES



#### THE MANOEUVRES OF KENNEDY JONES

was going to buy *The Times* appeared in the *Daily Chronicle* on Monday morning. On Monday also *The Times* had, in accordance with Godfrey Walter's reaction to the paragraph in the *Observer*, acknowledged that the reorganized proprietorship would be headed by Arthur Walter and Pearson. Any publicity, at that stage, was clearly bound to disconcert the proprietors and thus hamper any negotiation for the reorganization of *The Times*. Godfrey Walter was well aware of the fact but he believed that silence would be held to confirm the accepted but false interpretation of the *Observer* paragraph—*i.e.*, that *The Times* had come to terms with Harmsworth; he also believed that his announcement would suffice to dispose of all rumours. But the publicity thus given to the name of Pearson and his own "some day" interview set every tongue wagging, in the proprietary and out of it.

During Monday journalists were busy seeing journalists; Pearson was busy seeing them. Kennedy Jones, of Carmelite House, was also interviewed. He was "quite positive," he told the Westminster Gazette, "that his friends knew nothing about it." Asked if his statement was an authorized denial, he said he didn't know that it was—"but it could be taken as one." Actually George Sutton and Kennedy Jones were that day cooperating on a "story" for the *Daily Mail* of the following Tuesday, January 7. They worked hard on it and, despite the delays in the Anglo-French telegraph service, had the advice of the "Chief," who, at the Ritz Hotel, in Paris, answered their many wires addressed to his Austrian valet, Brunnbauer. The result was well calculated. Tuesday's Daily Mail printed the Pearson news at the top of the first column of the page facing the leaders and followed it with an account of Pearson's career. A paragraph was included whose significance could hardly be missed by those proprietors of The Times who, influenced by rumours emanating from Hooper and Bell, suspected that Walter was seeking to secure the future of his printing profits at the expense of the historic character of the paper. The Daily Mail quoted Mr. Joseph Chamberlain: "Mr. Pearson is the greatest hustler I have ever known," and proceeded to say that he "is a great believer in the strenuous life. It is one of his sayings that his success is due to the habit he contracted when a young man of never wasting time and always working with extraordinary speed." The emphasis upon hustle was echoed in a leading article: "Mr. Pearson is to be warmly congratulated upon his great success in securing control of The Times at a point comparatively early in his career. Our best wishes will follow Mr. C. Arthur Pearson in his newest and greatest enterprise."

The effect these paragraphs were intended to produce was obvious. The world was being prepared for the hustling of the historic journal into reorganization, revision and perhaps revolution: the strenuous Pearson was to have everything under his control. Such an enterprise was to be conducted, apparently. with the blessing of the rival Press. But in bestowing its benedictions publicly and emphatically the Harmsworth Press knew it was embarrassing the scheme. Pearson, however, who was not aware of the origin of the Observer paragraph, had no reason to suspect the benevolence of the Daily Mail. Its kindly reference to his genius could, it was true, be interpreted as a natural greeting from one "vellow" pressman to another, but he did not then see it in that light, though many of the proprietors did. From Paris the line of the Daily Mail was actively followed up; a personal sketch was in hand. At a decent time on Tuesday morning, also, the "Chief" considered sending a telegram. He had, it would appear, just heard or read the news. The congratulatory wire was drafted and deliberately addressed to "C. A. Pearson, The Times, London."

PLEASE ACCEPT MY WARM CONGRATULATIONS AND ADMIRATION FOR MOST SPLENDID JOURNALISTIC ACHIEVEMENT ON RECORD HAVE WRITTEN PERSONAL SKETCH OF YOU PROOF WILL BE SUBMITTED TONIGHT.

The personal sketch, wired to Sutton and signed "X," was headlined: "Mr. Pearson—A Personal Sketch—By an Opponent." It was flattering in the extreme. When he saw the proof Pearson was most grateful, and in the afternoon he telegraphed to the sender:

MY SINCEREST THANKS FOR YOUR MORE THAN KIND TELEGRAM AND FOR THE STATEMENTS ABOUT ME THAT HAVE APPEARED AND ARE TO APPEAR IN THE DAILY MAIL YOUR GENEROSITY IS OVERWHELMING AND I AM DEEPLY APPRECIATIVE.

At the same time Pearson wrote a letter to "X" expressing deep satisfaction:

I trust that I may have an opportunity of showing one day how much I appreciate your action. Words are poor things in such cases and written words particularly so. Perhaps you will let me tell you how kind I think it of you, one day when you return. Were all "opponents" as generous as yourself, business life would be a good deal happier than it is apt to be.

But later in the afternoon messages revealed to Pearson that the attention given to him by the Daily Mail was not liked in

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# HARMSWORTH'S EFFUSIVE PRAISE OF PEARSON

P.H.S. Friends there thought that it was by no means to the advantage of the scheme that Pearson should be publicly identified with the school of journalism represented by Harmsworth and the Daily Mail. Pearson was interrupted in his reflections upon the situation by another telegram from Paris acknowledging receipt of his own and informing him that a representative of the Daily Mail had been instructed to wait upon him for the purpose of an interview. Pearson now, for the first time, saw the Harmsworth Press as intrusive. He became nervous and suspicious. The amount of notice taken of himself was greater than he expected. The Daily Chronicle sought an interview. The World representative (stirred up by Harmsworth, as Pearson guessed) also came. They were refused. To "X" Pearson wrote that night:

I have just had your wire about an interview in the Mail. I am very sorry to have refused, but I believe you will realize the position I am placed in. All this publicity is rubbing things in very much so far as the Walters are concerned, and from the point of view of their feelings I do not want to be seeming to push myself at all.

Believe me I very much appreciate all that you have done, and I will be very glad, if you still think it worth while, to have a talk with the *Daily Mail* after I have been in *The Times* office a few days.

The letter, dated January 7, 1908, was not written on the stationery of The Times but upon that of the Standard which, with that of the Express, was the only notepaper he was yet entitled to use. The time had not yet come, as he was convinced it surely would, when he could write from The Times office. He had already instructed some of his staff to examine the printing resources of *The Times* with a view to composing and machining the Standard there. In the meantime the effects of the Harmsworth publicity needed to be counteracted. Not only should there be no new interview in the Daily Mail but the tendency of what had been published must be reversed. The "hustler" determined to show hustle in a conservative direction. A communiqué, dressed up as an "exclusive" statement, was forthwith given—not to Pearson's own Evening Standard—but to the Globe. That same evening the journal published an anonymous but authorized pronouncement:

Those who are to be concerned in the new management realize as fully as do the gentlemen who have long been connected with the editorial conduct of *The Times* that nothing could be more fatal to the interests of the new company than to alter in any way the tone or complexion of *The Times*. *The Times* is to remain *The Times* in the best and fullest sense of the word.

The whole of the long statement in which occurred this direct negative to the suggestions of that Tuesday's *Daily Mail* was also ordered to be got ready for reprinting, and prominent display, on the front page of the following Wednesday's *Daily Express*.

Pearson, with these dispositions made, wound up the work of Tuesday in confident mood. In a week or ten days, it was fairly certain the Court would have before it his scheme supported with adequate money and the approval of the proprietorship, or most of it. There was one more thing to be done. Pearson needed to explain to the staff of the Standard that although he was acquiring control of The Times there was not the slightest intention to stop the separate publication of the Standard. The necessary reassurance was given during a dinner at which Pearson took the chair on the same Tuesday night. On that occasion there was summoned to the Savoy a gathering of Pearson's key-men. They welcomed such an opportunity of toasting him and wishing him all success at P.H.S. The feelings of the Standard men were soothed. They knew they would continue in their jobs. It was an assurance that was necessary, but its announcement at a dinner was hardly an act of discretion as regards The Times.

Unknown to all those at the gathering, the Savoy had that same day been the scene of another meeting also connected with the affairs of P.H.S. Some time before noon Kennedy Jones, acting on the instructions of Harmsworth, caused a telephone call to be made, and afterwards left Carmelite House for the Strand and looked in at the Savoy. He was hoping that there might be, in the grill room, Hooper, who, it was scarcely possible to doubt, must know something of what was afoot, and who, if suitably approached, might be persuaded to talk. The telephone call had-not been wasted. By no means to his surprise he saw Hooper already seated.

- "I see from the papers," said Jones after the preliminaries, "you are going to have a new proprietor at *The Times*."
- "I guess that even in this country a man cannot sell property which does not belong to him," replied Hooper.

They promptly fell to discussing the situation. Jones admitted he was greatly interested in getting *The Times*; Hooper confessed he would like to see Pearson beaten. But, he said, he hadn't yet got it for the proprietors and the Court had to have their say. He himself could buy *The Times* for £300,000 or £350,000 he said; so could anybody else since it was only a question of outbidding Pearson and thus getting the support of the proprietors. This was an optimistic statement. He had to agree that this

sum might, and in all probability would, be required in cash. Further, he told Jones that the proprietors were very suspicious and that no deal would go through if the wrong people were brought in, or, at least, if their names were mentioned. If he tried a new scheme of his own he would keep his name secret. For his own part, he said, he wanted to be in on the deal for the sake only of his book interests; but, he admitted, the slightest suspicion that he was connected with any scheme would make the proprietors reject it. The same thing would be true of Kennedy Jones and his friends. The old stagers already objected to Pearson. As to the real situation of the paper's finances, Hooper said that money (he must have been referring to the printing profits) had been made by The Times during the past years. Something ought to be done and could be done with Bell. "See Bell for yourself later," Hooper concluded, "I will arrange it. Leave it to me for the present."

Having left Jones, Hooper forthwith visited Bell and counselled him to look at the problem of beating Pearson, or anybody else, from an entirely new standpoint. "Why not work with Alfred Harmsworth?" he said. Bell's instant reply was "Never." Hooper's answer was a formidable one. Kennedy Jones, he said, had been to see him, had told him that Harmsworth had long been interested in securing control of *The Times*; had for months been watching developments; was aware of the Pearson negotiations; and now, because he had the money with which to outbid Pearson and any others on the horizon, was disposed to intervene. Bell's words were uncompromising. He told Hooper that the objections which he and most people entertained towards Pearson applied equally to Harmsworth. Many, indeed, might regard Pearson on the whole as less unsatisfactory than Harmsworth. In any case, that he, Bell, who had expressed so strongly to public men his objection to Pearson, and encouraged Buckle, Chirol and others to do the same, should now attempt to bring in Harmsworth must necessarily appear highly equivocal. It was hardly to be thought of.

But despite his uncompromising words, Bell realized that Harmsworth's threat to intervene over his head made the matter extremely serious. What could be done against it? Bell who had failed with Walter regarding Hooper's first scheme had also failed with Lord Cromer and others regarding a scheme of his own. What new source would enable Bell to outbid Harmsworth? There was, too, Miss Brodie-Hall's scheme, said to be amply backed. It was all a question of a lot of money and ready money and this Harmsworth possessed and was prepared to use. Bell

tried to imagine a scheme in which Harmsworth, as controller, could himself be controlled. Any such scheme would have to be very carefully pondered. Even the slightest preliminary between Bell and Harmsworth would have to be conducted in absolute secrecy. The objection to Pearson's scheme was that The Times was not safe in his hands; that Walter had, in fact, jeopardized its historic character by putting him in charge. Could that character be safeguarded by Bell with Harmsworth in financial control? Would Harmsworth cooperate with him at all? He did not like Harmsworth and he knew Harmsworth had no love for him. But what Hooper said needed to be looked into. He would at any rate so far accept his advice as to see Kennedy Jones. He told him so that evening. Hooper said he would see Jones on the following day. Thus Pearson's indiscreet and optimistic dinner at the Savoy took place just as Hooper came to the belief that he was on the point of completing a scheme that would bring Bell and Harmsworth together.

A scheme to place Harmsworth, under effective guarantees, in control was also gradually taking shape in Bell's mind. A second meeting between Jones and Hooper took place at Hooper's office on Wednesday morning, January 8; Jones then said that his previous statement was exaggerated; Harmsworth had not undertaken to buy *The Times*. It might be necessary to persuade him, &c.; there might be some delay. Harmsworth was always slow to commit himself. The conference resulted in the following telegram. It was addressed to Brunnbauer, the "Chief's" valet, at the Ritz, Paris:

ARE YOU PREPARED TO COME INTO A DEAL WHICH WILL UPSET NEGOTIATIONS EVENTUALLY ACQUIRING BUSINESS OURSELVES? PROFITS ON PAPER HAVE FOR EIGHT YEARS NEVER BEEN BELOW THIRTY THOUSAND SCHEME WOULD REQUIRE THREE FIFTY THOUSAND WHICH WE COULD BORROW AND PROMISES GOOD MONEY IN RETURN WOULD HAVE TO BE CARRIED THROUGH BY SOME BIG MAN OR SYNDICATE WHO WOULD SAVE ORGANIZATION FOR EMPIRE SUTTON CAN START TONIGHT KAY JAY

After sending this wire Jones returned to Carmelite House to see Sutton. While they were discussing the matter Bell was busy thinking. He saw that the position he held lent him much negotiating power, which he could either give or refuse to Hooper. Exactly what that power, without money, amounted to he did not know. What was certain was that the *Daily Mail's* publicity had increased Pearson's unpopularity with the older and bigger proprietors and with political persons, and that Pearson was over confident.

### HARMSWORTH IN DETACHED MOOD

In other words, the character of *The Times*, as a factor in the situation, had increased in importance as the consequence of the publicity. That fact increased to some extent the value of his own presence as a guarantor to any scheme that promised continuity of character. It was an argument upon which, in later conversations with Harmsworth, he was tempted to lay too much stress. But on January 8, the provision of explicit guarantees covering the character of the paper was a first necessity; and, since he did not distinguish between *The Times* and the existing literary staff responsible for the text of it, the retention of the leading editorial writers in their present positions was also essential. These conditions, if acceptable to the Harmsworths, would attract the support of the large proprietors who were now busy bracketing Pearson with sensationalism.

Bell, having made up his mind to follow Hooper's advice to the extent of seeing what Harmsworth's response would be to these conditions, went forward without delay. His intentions had never been in doubt to Walter but any plans were bound to be secret from everybody. The policy of secret negotiation, however, had its drawbacks. Time was fleeting. The case of Sibley v. Walter was due to come before the Court for a preliminary hearing on January 30. There were, at the most, three weeks in which to thrash out questions of vast importance. Meanwhile weather was making Channel communications difficult. There was no telegraph or telephone working on January 8. Jones's telegram did not reach its destination until the morning of Thursday, January 9, and the telephone was still out of order. Cut off from contact with his agents, Harmsworth's knowledge and, therefore, intentions remained vague. Apart from Jones's telegram he knew nothing more than Sutton had told him at the weekend. Since then the paragraph had appeared in *The Times*; its publication convinced Harmsworth that Walter and his lawyers knew more about their own business than did Sutton, Hooper, and Jones. If The Times said that Pearson was to be in control the probability was that The Times was right and that he, Harmsworth, had been right, after all, in congratulating him, competitor though he was. That was one line his mind was inclined to take.

But if Sutton and Jones were right, that the deal had not yet been concluded, what then? Harmsworth was alternately attracted and repelled by the prospect of taking action to forestall Pearson. He had no personal dislike of the man although he objected to the competition of the *Daily Express* and its taking from the *Daily Mail* such a valuable man as R. D. Blumenfeld.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 530, supra, for the Harmsworth-Sutton meeting.

It might be no bad thing if Pearson, for the time being, got himself involved with *The Times*. The reorganization of the paper, of the office and of the ownership, were jobs that must tax the strength and ability of any man. The *Daily Mail* was heavy responsibility enough and, if Pearson's health was none too robust, neither was his own. Both, curiously enough, were having trouble with their eyes. On the afternoon of the 9th he set down his ideas for the benefit of Sutton:

9 January 1908

What I would impress upon you is the fact that everything that happens in Carmelite House is known. Otherwise I would have asked Jones to come over. It would be known that he had come. What I feel disposed to do is:

- (1) To stop the negotiations by a slightly superior offer which of course would be supported by the ordinary shareholders no one of whom I should think could object to the new company in face of a higher offer of money.
- (2) To let Pearson remain as managing director, under our guidance, in which case I think he would be an excellent one;
- (3) Keep our name out of the matter altogether. We have not the time to devote to business other than that we have at present in hand.
  - (i) Newfoundland; (ii) Daily Mail; (iii) The other business.

What I particularly wish to avoid is what is most likely to happen, that Pearson, who is very much quicker in striking than we are, will hear of these negotiations, know their source, at once raise more money from Sir Alexander Henderson which he can do and place us in the unpleasant position of appearing to have behaved treacherously and to have been found out. The present publicity can have done the unfortunate paper no good (witness other papers' comments on its state) and any litigation arising out of these negotiations would about kill it.

The Mail is in my judgment a very much greater power than The Times will ever be and we can make it an infinitely greater thing than it is. It might be, if it were thought essential, that our name should appear. I would say let my name and that of K.J. go on the Board. I should require the same control as I have in Carmelite House which has never been arbitrarily exercised and assuming that he would accept the position I think Pearson could remain a very excellent managing director. He is an easy man to argue with on matters, most industrious, and his vanity would keep him there 14 hours a day, during which time his other business would disappear. It would help us in other directions. I will subscribe 50,000.

As to Hooper and his Book Club, no Book Club for us—at any rate on its present lines. If K.J. thinks well of this let him come over by tonight's boat but let him remember that everybody knows where he goes and what he does. He ought not to say at the office that he is going to be away. He can come quietly here.

### HARMSWORTH MAKES UP HIS MIND

In view of Pearson's quickness in striking, he might prefer to wait a day or two until he has put some effective block in the way. Otherwise you will find that agreements have been made with other individual shareholders and as soon as the Courts meet the scheme will go through.

The lawyer here is going over about the matter to-day and would have gone yesterday but for the storm.

Hooper was so hopelessly misinformed in the matter that before anything whatsoever is done you must find out through Graham whether the matter has not been irrevocably decided.

When I saw Walter's statement, immediately after our announcement, I knew the thing had been finished. Jones said not. He saw Hooper who also said, Not—showing that he knows nothing of what is going on.

It is most important that we should not put ourselves in a false and humiliating position by acting in the dark. Is it likely that *The Times* lawyers would have allowed such an announcement to appear in their own paper unless it was finished and riveted? They are well aware that among the shareholders there are two or three very litigious people—Sibley and others.

Do not allow yourselves, either of you, to be carried away by zeal. Personally as I told you here when you spoke to me two months ago, I am content with what we have. You have also to remember that anything either of you does will be ascribed to me. Walk warily.

The correct interpretation of this instruction was not an easy matter for Sutton. One thing was plain. Harmsworth was unwilling to have it taken for granted that he would buy The Times but not unwilling to have his interest aroused in a practical scheme. It was up to him and Jones to show that they knew what they were talking about, and, above all, that neither was to forget the Daily Mail, the continued prosperity of which was the first consideration of all. The subtle suggestion that Pearson would overwork himself at P.H.S. to the detriment of everything at Shoe Lane and to the benefit of the advertising revenue of Carmelite House, was a characteristic piece of that almost occult prevision upon which Harmsworth was wont to pride himself in later years. The whole question of buying The Times was, for him, very coolly answered; nor did he wish Sutton and Jones to be mesmerized by the historical association, political prestige and literary culture of the journal. He had no intention to drop the Daily Mail. But Hooper was right and Harmsworth was wrong; Pearson's scheme had yet to be "riveted."

To get Pearson out and to get Harmsworth in, however, Hooper's scheme would have to be thoroughly well thought out; to do it in time, he would have to act quickly. But he was not

to work alone. Buckle and Bell, in addition to their other activities amongst the proprietors of The Times, were taking a hand as against Pearson himself; they were working through Morley, an old friend of Bell's, who was to make everybody see that the Walter-Pearson scheme was an impossible one. Eminent persons assisted. 1 Between the 10th and the 20th, Kennedy Jones, with Hooper's, and Jackson's, assistance, managed to draft an agreement with Bell. Bell himself had not seen Harmsworth, who was still in France. It was believed that he might make a secret visit to London towards the end of the month. Hooper, primed by Jones and Sutton, was encouraging. Bell now realized that the position he was about to take as the champion of the rights of the Editor and his staff implied a duty to acquaint them, in time, of the plans for their and the paper's future. Evidence in opposition to Godfrey Walter's application (i.e., the "Pearson" scheme) was due to be presented to Court on the 30th; and Bell, believing that he had secured from Harmsworth, through Hooper and Jones, guarantees which he deemed sufficient for the continuity of the character of the paper, thought it proper to give Arthur Walter by letter, and Buckle by word of mouth, a portion of his confidence. Walter surprised Bell by his cordiality. He had revised his opinion of Pearson and already regretted his brother's action in bringing him in. "Directly it is upset, I shall come to you," he promised.

Two days before the Court sat, Harmsworth did return to London, staying incognito at Sutton's. On January 29, Bell wrote asking to see him. "Couldn't I go out to some suburb and you pick me up in a motor?" There were indeed many things to be discussed since nothing had yet taken place directly between Bell and Harmsworth. What had been done had been done through the medium of Hooper, Jackson and Jones. Nothing whatever had yet been reduced to writing except the draft by Soames on the lines of the Walter-Pearson agreement (including the guarantees embodied in this agreement) that had been made to serve as a basis of discussion.<sup>2</sup> The last week of January and the first of February were for Bell a time of unrelieved anxiety. He was oppressed by the secrecy, the vagueness and the urgency of the negotiations. He needed desperately to see Harmsworth. He, however, returned to Boulogne without communicating with him. Harmsworth, it was plain, did not intend, yet, to commit himself. Bell's draft agreement with Jones was no more than a

<sup>1</sup> Lord Esher wrote to Knollys on January 17: "Late in the evening I sent for Pearson whom John Morley wanted to see, and they talked about *The Times*. Moberly Bell is bitterly hurt. I fancy he has been badly treated by the Walters." (Windsor Archives.) 2 For this agreement and draft, see p. 522, supra.

### THE ACTION STARTS

Nevertheless, it appeared impossible to Bell that he could avoid telling Walter something, since he, as receiver, as well as Chief Proprietor, occupied an important technical position in the hearing due to take place on the 30th. Bell continued to regard it as unsafe to divulge any details and certainly any names; for even if the firm assurance of Harmsworth's adhesion was forthcoming, he would have to ask for the proprietors' support of a purchaser who was anonymous. Buckle, when informed that this was the plan, disliked the very idea. To allow The Times to be financed by an unknown capitalist was not only undesirable on grounds of public policy, but anonymity in such an operation would be interpreted as covering a source in some respect discreditable; and, in any case, such a procedure was unfair to Pearson, who would inevitably and rightly make it his business to discover the new capitalist's identity, which he might announce with highly disconcerting results. Walter, for his part, took time to consider Bell's communication. In all the circumstances the only thing for Bell to do was to play for time.

When, therefore, the case of Sibley v. Walter came forward on January 30 the Master was asked to grant an application by both parties to have another fourteen days in which to complete filing their evidence. Not until the last day of the month did Bell succeed in extracting something in the way of an assurance from Hooper that Harmsworth meant business. He also had another and more satisfactory interview with Jones, and figures were mentioned. On February 1 Bell was able to write again, this time in more definite terms, to Walter. "I want you," he now said, "to have absolute faith in all I do. I am acting solely in what I believe to be the best interests of The Times. Your own interests I regard as very closely identified with those of The Times and in no case will I work against The Times." He said that his scheme did "not ignore profit; it hopes to make it. I believe it can make a reasonable profit after paying a fair price to the proprietors and a fair price to you. It wants to maintain The Times as it is with radical changes in the machinery part, and no change whatever on the political side or management of the paper except that it will give fuller views on every subject without regard to expense." Bell's policy of secrecy was defended, somewhat speciously, as being analogous to the paper's own practice of anonymity. His unnamed supporter was a firm believer in the principle. "He desires to maintain so far as possible the absolute anonymity of the staff and of all connected with the paper. More particularly himself." The paper, predicted Bell, would be governed by a council of members of the (editorial) staff with Walter as chairman. John Walter should be assistant manager "so as to fit him to succeed his father on the council." The figures involved in the transfer of the property were duly given to Walter. The Chief Proprietor replied by asking for time in which to consider these written proposals, which amounted in fact to a firm offer.

Bell next saw Walter personally. They discussed the scheme. When the conversation moved round, as it inevitably did, to the personality of the purchaser, Walter attempted to discover his identity. "I know who he is," he said, mentioning the correct name. Bell was silent for a moment and then replied: "I've been told that name among a dozen others and I've always replied to each that I neither affirm nor deny." "Quite right," said Walter, "that's the best way." On the scheme itself he offered to seek advice, and forthwith sought Buckle's opinion. On February 2 the Editor replied saying that he had frankly told Bell that he could not support an anonymous syndicate and that he suspected that the unknown capitalists were the familiar firm of Hooper and Jackson. It was widely believed, indeed. that the Americans were in intimate contact with Bell. Hooper still conducted book-sales from The Times office and many had seen him with Bell. There were some who held that his resources were behind a new scheme. Some talk got into type. Graphic was led to print an exclusive to the effect that the Americans were Bell's unrevealed principals. This statement was officially denied through the Press Association on the following day and Hooper thought it prudent to leave for the Continent. Before doing so he handed over to Jackson the task of acting as Harmsworth's intermediary. Bell also denied the "American" story to Buckle personally. The Editor nettled him by pointing out that, after all, Pearson was British and that, although he thought him bound to do more harm than good, The Times might conceivably be in worse hands.

Simultaneously with these arguments in the office real progress was made in the negotiations outside, secret as they were. Harmsworth had been convinced that Pearson was now so unpopular with the proprietors that the agreement was virtually at an end, and that the way was now open for him to advance without the probability of having to retreat. At last it became necessary to put the scheme upon a business-like footing. Harmsworth sent by hand to Messrs. Hooper and Jackson the following letter:

February 3rd, 1908

I am desirous of purchasing *The Times* on behalf of myself and others, and I authorize you up to June 30th, 1908, to negotiate for the

# HARMSWORTH'S DEFINITE CASH OFFER

purchase of the copyright thereof for any sum up to £350,000. I agree to be satisfied with the purchase at that price.

It is understood that I shall not be liable for any litigation between *The Times* shareholders and that my only legal expenses shall be those properly incurred by you in the negotiations, which shall not exceed £10.000.

Kindly acknowledge this.

The firm, represented by Jackson, replied at once:

125, High Holborn, London, W.C.

4th Feby 1908

Yours of the 3rd at hand. We take it that when you speak of £10,000 for legal expenses you refer to any expenses that we may be put to. Of course you understand that if at any time before the 30th of June next you wish to take matters out of our hands you are quite at liberty to do so by taking over any responsibility that we may have entered into in regard to this matter for you.

Yours truly HOOPER & JACKSON

With this authority Jackson visited Bell for the first time with a definite proposal, Harmsworth remaining in London, in order to take up the negotiations if Hooper and Jackson's preliminaries turned out satisfactorily. On the cash side rapid progress was made. It is probable, however, that Jackson did not then inform Bell that Harmsworth was prepared to pay £350,000, but provisionally mentioned a lesser sum. 1 Agreement regarding the arrangements to be made by which the preservation of the character of the paper could be guaranteed was not so easily come to. The Americans did not know their principal's mind on the crucial question of the guarantees. A meeting with Harmsworth was proposed. Bell wished for nothing better. The two had corresponded on trade matters since 1899 and on Encyclopaedia business in 1902. They had met in the past on several occasions but had not come across each other since 1906, when they had quarrelled over the Book Club. On February 4 they both went to the office of Harmsworth's accountant, MacKenzie, in Sackville Street, W. Jackson was also present. The atmosphere was not unfriendly, but both parties were very cautious.

"Well, Mr. Bell," said Harmsworth, "I am going to buy *The Times* with your assistance, if you will give it; without, if you will not." Bell explained that he had just seen Walter, and expressed his willingness to discuss the matter with a view to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The sum was raised, contingently, to £400,000 on March 15, 1908. (See infra, p. 569.)

### THE TIMES FOR SALE

supporting him provided the right conditions were agreed upon. He made it clear that it was not by any means a matter of money only, or of his own personal position. In answer to questions he told Harmsworth what he had received in the way of pay. He repeated what he had told Hooper and Jones that guarantees for the character of the paper needed to be definite and the proposals for the security of the staff adequate. The hint that he had received, through Hooper and Jones, of Harmsworth's willingness to give these undertakings had been the basis of his last conversation with Walter. To Bell's pleasure Harmsworth protested that he had not the slightest objection to these demands since he wished The Times of the future to be conducted as it had been in the best days of its past. He emphasized the need for maintaining the Parliamentary reports, the foreign dispatches and all that made The Times the distinctive newspaper it was, and, to him personally, a covetable possession. As far as he was personally concerned Bell could be the Managing Director of the new Limited Company.

The two, who began by distrusting each other, ended in complete agreement that *The Times* "must be saved" and that they would work together for that end. It did not follow that the mutual trust was complete. Bell would certainly have preferred a different sort of purchaser; Harmsworth undoubtedly a different sort of Managing Director. Both were agreed that none of the considerable body of dissentient proprietors who looked askance at Pearson would swallow Harmsworth with a good appetite. Bell departed with reservations about Harmsworth but with complete faith in his scheme and in its possibilities of success. With himself, Buckle and Chirol in office, he saw no point in further discussing or defining such a point as the ultimate responsibility for policy.

There was much more immediate work to be accomplished. It was important to secure support within P.H.S. During the first ten days or so of the month of February, Bell was often at the pains of arguing with Buckle. The point as to nationality was duly made; Bell was able to assure Buckle that his supporters were not Americans but British. Thus the names Hooper and Jackson were eliminated. It was impossible, unfortunately, to overcome the Editor's repugnance to the selling of *The Times* to an anonymous purchaser, even if British. He put before him the unknown purchaser's "ideas." Were they or were they not such as Buckle agreed with? That was the question he should answer and forget the rest. Bell saw that the distinction thus drawn between the new proprietor's "ideas" and his personality

# HARMSWORTH'S DEMAND FOR "CONTROL"

threw additional weight upon the "ideas" and their application. He became proportionately insistent to Jackson and to Jones that the new régime should change only the mechanical department and the publishing arrangements. The stress Bell laid on these points promptly aroused Harmsworth's suspicions. Once aroused, these were more difficult to allay than was expected. On February 7 Jackson telephoned to Bell. In a long conversation he said that it must not be thought that because The Times was to be conducted as it had been that it was the intention to avoid making editorial changes. Jackson hinted that the Harmsworth people had "ideas" upon future developments in the office of The Times and of the part the "Chief" would play in them. Bell must not forget that a very large sum of cash was being found and that those who found it would naturally want something like control for their money. They might not want to make big profits but neither did they want to run the risk of big losses. There must not be misunderstandings or weaknesses. Therefore, the responsibility for policy must be defined. What Harmsworth had in mind to secure was the same control, in the words he used writing to Sutton on January 9, "as I have in Carmelite House, which has never been arbitrarily exercised."

Meanwhile Bell insisted to Jackson on the telephone, and afterwards wrote, that he was not engaged in any attempt to get better and better terms for himself:

February 7th 1908

22, Park Crescent,

Portland Place. W.

My dear Jackson

In reference to our talk on the telephone I want first to thank you for your kindly expressions about myself and your good offices.

Next so far as cash remuneration goes I leave myself absolutely in your hands.

At the very beginning of this negotiation N. said to me "Now Mr. Bell what do you expect to make out of this?" I said truthfully that if I could save *The Times* and get it carried on on the lines he indicated I should be content even if I lost money by it.

He then asked what I got and I told him £3000 with an occasiona bonus on dividend of £100 to £300 and I added that I had always spent more than my income. In explanation I said that whatever entertaining had been done by *The Times* was done by me and that I thought that it was necessary for someone on *The Times* to entertain socially—that it even paid The Times. He asked if I had no allowance for that and I said none. He then said "You ought to get (or make) £5000 a year out of it." I said I thought that was generous. Then he

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### THE TIMES FOR SALE

asked my age and said that ordinary shares might be given me and that the interest might be in lieu of salary but of course that I ought to draw for my current expenses up to a certain sum per month and if the shares did not produce as much of course there would be no claim on me for reimbursement and that in the event of retiring or death the interest on those shares would be in lieu of any allowance. I told him I thought all this more than fair and I was quite willing to leave the whole thing in his hands. I worded it in my letter to you as I understood that—in one way or another I was to get £4800 or £5000—but that I was not to get both pay and interest. Settle it as you both like. Get this thro' and honestly I don't care a damn—or a very little damn!

As to the wording of the other matters pray don't let him have any idea that I was doing any more than trying that difficult task of trying to reduce general ideas into a few concise words. My assumption is that he is giving me general instructions—You will do this—You will not do that—and as for the suggested return of the letter accepted I thought it the way to save him trouble if in a general way he agreed. Get the general principles accepted and I will word them as you like. Of course I would far rather have them in a note from him but that gives him trouble.

Yours very truly
C. F. MOBERLY BELL

Despite the letter's irrelevance to the main point (i.e., of control), it was hoped that it would satisfy Harmsworth. Bell's own powers in the reorganized constitution were so lightly touched upon as to leave the text susceptible of almost any interpretation, since it was his design to avoid defining anybody's future functions except those of Buckle and Chirol. Jackson, having reported to Harmsworth, replied to Bell that the letter was vague; his principal must have something more definite. Bell took in hand the drafting of a second letter, or rather the task of thinking over the terms of it. It was the most difficult task of his life.

Buckle's refusal to give his support to an anonymous scheme was now seen to be a most awkward obstacle, for his counsel was sought by Walter, who could hardly be expected to give what Buckle refused. It was the essence of Bell's scheme that it maintained the character and the staff of *The Times*, at the head of which was the Editor, and Bell could not possibly disregard him in this connexion. It was most awkward because it was of the first importance that Buckle's, and through him Walter's, support should be got for Bell's scheme and for nobody else's.

In Walter's case, moreover, there was a further serious difficulty: as a signatory to the Pearson agreement, he was averse from voicing open opposition to it. He had been astonished at the

# THE EXACT MEANING OF "CONTROL"

increasing, though not, as he believed, spontaneous, opposition to Pearson, but he would not himself put forward the suggestion of withdrawing his signature from the agreement. Nevertheless, he, as Receiver, appointed on July 31, 1907, recognized that it was his bounden duty to consider, on behalf of the proprietors, any serious scheme and to put it before them with or without his recommendation. Once more, however, he did not himself wish to initiate opposition to Pearson by introducing the Bell scheme to the proprietors. As a way out he instructed Soames to select one of his clients who was also a proprietor and, after consultation with Bell, return to talk the matter over with himself. Soames was aware that, as Receiver, Walter could only consider a written, closely drafted, and solid scheme. He therefore conducted a separate investigation and, as he told Walter on or about February 8, became convinced that the Bell scheme was at least financially practicable. Walter could then no longer refuse to place it before the owners of the property. Hence, in consequence of Soames's report, and in view of the urgency of the situation, Walter felt justified in assuring Bell and Soames that if one proprietor could be found to sponsor it, he would not only announce it to the general body of the proprietary but would himself acknowledge that he had abandoned, and would recommend the abandonment by others of, the Pearson agreement. General Sterling, duly approached by Soames, agreed to sponsor Bell's scheme. Thus the way was opened for Walter to recommend Bell's scheme to the proprietors. Meanwhile Bell had completed his new letter for Jackson to send to Harmsworth on the subject of the control. It had been difficult to write but he was sure it would satisfy him.

Bell was now confident. He had won Walter's and Sterling's agreement to support his scheme, and was within sight of Pearson's withdrawal. Early on the morning of February 9, a Sunday, Sutton appeared at 22, Park Crescent, holding a small dispatch-case. Bell, not yet dressed, came downstairs clad in a dressing-gown and looking, so Sutton reported to his Chief, "every inch a Brigand." What Bell thought of his visitor's aspect is not on record, but he saw instantly that his visitor had not called to congratulate him. Sutton produced the second letter regarding the future control that Bell had sent Jackson for the satisfaction of Harmsworth. After a statement of Bell's personal gratitude, the letter proceeded:

There are other assurances which it is more difficult to make specific. They are assurances which I have made to colleagues and shareholders as to the future conduct of the paper referred to in

### THE TIMES FOR SALE

Article 8 of the agreement with General Sterling, and I should like to be assured that I have so far as possible interpreted correctly "X's" intentions.

The maintenance of the efficiency, reputation and character of *The Times* I understand among other things to imply:

- (a) That the main changes will be in matters relating to the mechanical production of the paper.
- (b) That changes will be made in the arrangement and get-up of the paper, but that in other respects the tendency will be to fuller and more complete reports.
- (c) That the paper shall remain at 3d., and shall be a 24pp. paper.
- (d) That the staff shall be under my control, and is to be treated in practically the same way as at present.
- (e) That the existing distinction between news and advertisements be strictly maintained.
- (f) That the paper shall avoid sensationalism, and appeal to the better educated portion of the public.

On all these points "X" has already expressed to me verbally his agreement, but I should like his written confirmation, and I ask his general assurance that in character *The Times* shall be in future as thoroughly independent of party clique and individual interest as it has been in the past.

I will only add that so important do I think it to get over any idea that *The Times* has changed, that I would advocate even avoiding changes that are expedient at first, and to make all visible changes in arrangement, etc., very gradually.

This letter returned signed as approved would perhaps be the simplest form of acknowledgment.

The whole of this, Sutton said, was utterly unsatisfactory. It was necessary for Bell to take responsibility for carrying on the business as a whole in Harmsworth's way and according to his orders. Unless he accepted, in writing, these conditions Sutton was authorized to return all the papers—here he opened his dispatch-case—and cancel the whole negotiations.

Bell flushed and remained silent. He thought, but not of himself. He could still surrender *The Times*. His refusal of Harmsworth's demands would make a story honourable enough to both sides, certainly to his. But his refusal could not prevent Harmsworth from proceeding without him and might have the effect of helping Pearson; and Harmsworth, unlike Pearson, was willing to have Bell on conditions. What, now, were the conditions? Sutton sketched them. Bell with intense reluctance took his pen to write, with the brevity that Harmsworth practised and exacted, but never himself surpassed, the following declaration:

# 22 Par Crescent. February qto 1908.

My dear Lord northcliffe It is understand that in the Event of your acquiring The Times newspaper I shall act as your managing Director for 5 years & carry out Pont you expres your desire that the present policy your absolute instructions. of Em paper in Home + Freign affairs should be Continued under the Editaship of me Bouchle and In my former letter I desired to man no Conditions I merely wirred to express what I believed Youngaithfully to be your ideas. Of mount that

# BELL'S SURRENDER TO HARMSWORTH

22 Park Crescent, February 9, 1908

It is understood that in the event of your acquiring *The Times* newspaper I shall act as your Managing Director for 5 years & carry out your absolute instructions.<sup>1</sup>

But you express your desire that the present policy of the paper in Home and Foreign Affairs should be continued under the Editorship of Mr. Buckle and Mr. Valentine Chirol.

In my former letter I desired to make no conditions. I merely wished to express what I believed to be your ideas.

C. F. MOBERLY BELL

Hands were shaken. Sutton kept his papers in his dispatch-case and duly carried off with them the undertaking to carry out "X's" "absolute instructions." The undertaking itself was acceptable to "X" at the time and the negotiations encountered no further obstacle from the purchaser's side.

The way was now clear for Bell to deal with Pearson. It was. however, not for him but for Walter to take the next step. It was necessary to inform Pearson that the amount of support from the proprietors upon which Walter had counted when he entered into the provisional agreement was not in fact forthcoming and that in consequence of the increasing opposition he could not recommend the scheme to the proprietors. Walter duly discharged this duty. After spending some days taking advice Pearson, with what degree of reluctance will appear, decided to withdraw his name from the Walter-Pearson scheme due to go before the Court for approval on February 14. The extended period of a fortnight allowed for the submission of evidence had been well used by Bell for the stirring up of opposition to Pearson and for the completion of his own scheme. Pearson's letter, withdrawing, was dated the 14th and taken to the Court by Soames. The Walter-Pearson scheme, therefore, was withdrawn at the last minute and Bell had thus won the first campaign. It had taken him six weeks to beat the plan which Godfrey Walter had engineered in November, 1907, and Pearson and Arthur Walter had formally accepted on January 3, 1908.

Bell's scheme, however, was still handicapped by the fact that it was anonymous. There was, too, Miss Brodie-Hall's scheme and perhaps others which might better impress the Court. Much therefore remained to be done. Bell had defeated the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> It is important to note the terms of the first paragraph in Bell's declaration, for later it became a grievance with Northcliffe that Bell persistently endeavoured to evade their just application.

Pearson "plot" but he still had to get his own scheme laid before the Court in its place, and to get it preferred to others. Hence while Pearson was being forced out Bell pushed ahead with all his energy. From the 9th, after the interview with Sutton, he had been conferring with Soames and his client, General John Sterling, whose opposition to the "Pearson" scheme had been notified to Walter on February 4. On February 11, Sterling signed an agreement whereby he covenanted to sell to C.F.M. Bell (of 22 Park Crescent, W.), the goodwill and properties, as scheduled, for cash to be lodged in the names of Bell and Sterling. Sterling, equally with Walter and Buckle, was unaware of the identity of Bell's supporter. Chirol and Monypenny, Bell's closest friends in the office, were also in the dark. Bell and only Bell knew. It was a dangerous position, for the proprietors would certainly attack Walter on the ground that he was blindly supporting Bell. Also it was an aspect of the matter upon which the Judge might have something to say.

Bell saw well the necessity to be circumspect. A few days before the adjourned case of Sibley v. Walter was due to come before the Court he decided upon a new move. On that day, February 14, the Court did little but register the entrance of plaintiffs, defendants, and the large number of documents in the case. The withdrawal of the "Pearson" scheme was registered, but nothing more positive was done. Decision was adjourned for the Receiver and others to submit new offers. Bell and Sterling had a month in which to perfect their own arguments; but any other proprietor had the same interval at his disposal. The first action Bell took after Pearson's withdrawal was to see if he could induce Miss Brodie-Hall to follow that example. On February 17 Bell saw her at P.H.S. She already knew, of course, that Pearson had withdrawn, but now heard for the first time that Walter had accepted the Bell-Sterling scheme. Her first objection was to the condition, as Bell's sine qua non, that the first four directors should be members of the present staff. Secondly, she reiterated her known views that a change of management was desirable. Thus on the constitutional side she was irreconcilable. Bell's mention of finance was no more successful. Miss Brodie-Hall considered that her friends had the means to satisfy the proprietors who wished to be paid out in cash and also to provide a certain amount of liquid capital. The idea of combining with Bell, or on any terms agreeing to withdraw, did not appeal to her. No business was done. It seemed certain, therefore, that on March 14, the Court would have to decide between the Bell scheme, the Brodie-Hall scheme, a possible Sibley scheme, and perhaps others.

# BELL'S DIFFICULTY OVER "X'S" ANONYMITY

What Bell had to do was to get as much support from the proprietors as he could. If Bell had failed to stop Miss Brodie-Hall he had, he knew, the backing of Walter, with whom other proprietors could be counted. He was uncertain whether he could maintain the anonymity of his backer and retain Walter's support. Walter during the month at his disposal had first of all to announce the Bell-Sterling scheme to the proprietors. This was done through Soames on February 19. It was explained that the scheme was not Walter's but Sterling and Bell's "acting in behalf of certain British gentlemen of position who have come forward to find a large sum of money in order to save *The Times* and to preserve it as an independent organ of the highest standard which they regard as a matter of national concern." This, it has been seen, was all that anybody in the office, or the world outside, knew.

But Bell had come to see that the general British character of the source of his anonymous money, and the specific propriety of his accepting it for *The Times*, and Walter's justification in recommending it, were all matters which were bound to be discussed in Court; also that much, if not everything, depended upon the attitude of the Judge. He knew, too, that Buckle, for one, was opposed to an "anonymous sale," and that Walter suspected and had only accepted it with the gravest misgivings. It was nevertheless vital to keep the support of Walter and of those who would vote with him. It was the anonymity of the purchaser that blocked the way. Bell resolved to tackle the difficulty by offering an impressive, independent and convincing assurance of the suitability of "X" as the future controller of *The Times*.

On February 13, therefore, Bell visited Lord Halsbury, Lord Chancellor until 1905, and laid before him all the circumstances. As a result of the interview Bell was able some days later to communicate the following statement to Walter:

February 18th 1908

I am authorized by Lord Halsbury to say that having been informed by me of all the circumstances of the case including the names of my principals he is cordially of opinion that the proposed arrangement is an excellent one and contains all the elements of a great success.

My principals will tomorrow call on Lord Halsbury and will repeat to him the assurances they have given to me as to the way in which they wish *The Times* to be conducted and Lord Halsbury will then give me a letter repeating the above assurance.

Now let me beg you as you value the existence of *The Times* and your own interest not to delay openly joining our scheme for failing a united front on one scheme I have the best reason for knowing that the judge cannot avoid a sale which will be ruin.

### THE TIMES FOR SALE

Thus on the 19th Soames was enabled to add a postscript to his circular assuring his clients that Lord Halsbury has seen "the gentlemen" who were interested in the scheme and that they had informed Lord Halsbury of their desire to "save" *The Times*. It was their wish to see in the paper, and at the earliest possible moment, an announcement that all litigation had been settled and that *The Times* would continue exactly as before under the same management and on the same lines.

At the same time news of Halsbury's statement was given to Bell's intimates in the office. The scruples of Chirol and his colleagues and others were laid completely at rest and they gladly added their influence to Bell's. Buckle was not so easily satisfied. He still saw in the sale of *The Times* to an anonymous purchaser, however respectable and however British he were said to be, a flagrant breach of sound journalistic policy, contradicting the principles of The Times and stultifying the professions of those who claimed to be struggling for the continuity of its character. Moreover, unable to make any fundamental distinction between the Walter family and The Times which that family had created. fostered and developed. Buckle failed to understand how anybody, especially one bearing the name of Walter, could, on any pretext, recommend an anonymous scheme or an anonymous sale. The Walters, much resorted to by the older individual proprietors anxious from the same high motives as Buckle to know to whom the historic paper was to be sold, were unable to give more information than was contained in Bell's letter and Soames's postscript. Any suggestion that Harmsworth was behind the scheme was naturally denied, though in conformity with the terms of Bell's letter he had seen Halsbury in order to repeat to him the assurances already given to Bell "as to the way in which they wish The Times to be conducted." Bell now feared that Halsbury's view of the suitability of Harmsworth as a purchaser would be bitterly contested by many of the proprietors and by Buckle. He was correct.

The success of Bell's scheme, it is clear, hung upon Harms-worth's identity remaining absolutely concealed from everybody until after—and perhaps long after—the Court had given its decision. The need for secrecy was, indeed, absolute. Any hint of the identity of the purchaser which reached the proprietors must antagonise a portion, perhaps large, of those who at present stood with Walter. These would never support a sale to Harmsworth. The Bell-Sterling agreement had therefore to be negotiated in complete secrecy. After Bell's first interview

### TRADE GOSSIP

with Harmsworth in Sackville Street suggestions and details were discussed by Jones, Sutton and Hooper. Bell went to Brighton for these talks. After Pearson's withdrawal and the Court registration on Saturday, the 14th, Harmsworth thought it essential to terminate his secret visit to London. He left London on the morning of Friday, February 20, for Folkestone. During the afternoon Harmsworth worked upon an article designed to throw Pearson and others off the scent. It was entitled "The Truth about *The Times*," with, as one of its headlines, "The Position of Moberly Bell." It was a long article recounting the history of the case of *Walter v. Sibley*, mentioning Pearson (acidly), the Walters (pityingly) and Bell—thus:

I have not for many years met Mr. Moberly Bell but running through the course of these negotiations I cannot help thinking that it is a pity some of the negotiators omitted to take into account the force and personality of the Egyptian correspondent of *The Times* who rescued that journal from an apparently hopeless financial condition after the dark days of the Parnell Commission. It is an open secret that under the Pearson scheme Mr. Moberly Bell was to receive his congé at very short notice.

# The writer declined to prophesy:

No one can tell what will follow as a result of *The Times* auction. Any change in the editorial staff would be lamentable. . . . I doubt whether the venerable journal was ever better written than during the past few years. I doubt whether its force of foreign correspondents was, as a whole, ever more efficient. . . . In the interests of all concerned, the sooner the Court of Chancery takes the matter in hand and settles affairs, one way or the other, the more certain we are to have in the future, as in the past, a national, uncommercial organ, admired, if not always liked, by all political parties, spacious enough to adequately report Parliamentary and legal proceedings, independent enough to be received everywhere as the representative of the Englishman.

This article, which made two columns when printed, was dispatched early on Saturday morning, February 21, to Sutton with instructions that he was himself to take it to the *Observer*. "Where did this come from? Who wrote it?" asked the Editor, Mr. J. L. Garvin. Sutton replied that he was sitting by his window at breakfast and the article "just blew in." It was published on February 23, 1908, by which time Harmsworth had crossed to Boulogne. There he remained for several weeks decoding and digesting scores of telegrams received from Sutton and Jones reporting the moves of Bell, the Walters, Pearson and Miss Brodie-Hall. Bell, his first visitor, was followed by

# THE TIMES FOR SALE

Sutton and Jones. Twice again, Harmsworth paid secret visits to London. After the second he returned to France and went on from Boulogne to Versailles. During the whole of January and February it was generally believed in London that he was in the south of France. His secret sojourns at Belsize Park with Sutton and at Carlisle Mansions with Butes, his secretary, passed unnoticed. No sign was given to the outside world that he had the slightest interest in the sale. Notwithstanding, on the 27th Sutton warned Harmsworth that

there are many rumours that Atlantic¹ is negotiating. It has been rumoured in Fleet Street. Marshall of the New York Times telephoned to-day to know if it were true. He got on to me, and I told him that I had never heard of this matter, and that you had been motoring abroad for some time. Also that if there were anything in the suggestion, I should have been likely to have heard about it. . . . If to-morrow's meeting is decided in our favour I think you should move on quickly.

The 28th February, being the date to which the meeting of the 14th had been adjourned, was the occasion of a further adjournment. There had been in the meantime no leakage. The delays, however intolerable in themselves, had not required Bell to break silence. It was reasonably thought that even further delays would not result in the one accident that would kill the Bell-Sterling scheme by alienating the support of many, perhaps all of the proprietors, *i.e.*, the revelation that the purchaser was Alfred Harmsworth. Bell's scheme must fail if the name of his backer were disclosed before March 16.

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Atlantic" is an abbreviated form of "Admiral of the Atlantic," the title which the Kaiser conferred upon himself, and Alfred Harmsworth diverted himself by employing it as his private code-name.

# XVII

# THE TIMES PURCHASED BY "X"

necessary as it was to Harmsworth and to Bell, daily multiplied for its promoters the difficulties of its passage. It was an increasing scandal to Buckle, a growing perplexity to Walter, a mounting grievance to the most easy-going of the proprietors. It was also a continual tease to the keenest of Fleet Street newsgetters. To Pearson it was the darkest of riddles. He listened to the rumours but could make nothing of them. It was certain that the Walter-Pearson agreement was cancelled; and as he knew well the personalities of *The Times*, another certainty was that he was utterly separated from Bell, and that nothing could bring them together. The anonymous character of the Bell-Sterling scheme held one advantage for its promoters: neither Pearson nor Henderson could go behind Bell. It was a decided advantage, as the other side was aware.

One day at the end of February, 1908, Sir Alexander Henderson called on Walter at P.H.S. In discussing the cancellation of the Walter-Pearson contract and the resulting change of plan, and the future of The Times, Henderson inquired if Bell's unknown supporter was Harmsworth. "No, I have no reason to believe it is Harmsworth," Walter answered. Asked whether he would support a new Pearson scheme if backed with more money. Walter said "No." The time had gone by, he added, when any scheme that included Pearson could hope to be successful. It was as much a question of personality as of money. "Very well," replied Henderson as he departed, "let us eliminate Pearson. I may make another suggestion." A day or two afterwards Walter told Bell of this conversation. When he mentioned the name of Harmsworth and quoted his answer to Henderson Bell interjected. "I think you were wrong to say even that much about any name." "I don't think it matters," answered Walter; "after all I don't know who it is and I'm not pressing to know." Bell, at once suspicious of Henderson's moves, and particularly of his willingness to suggest another name instead of Pearson, hardly that of Bell, thought it necessary to report at once to Harmsworth

—still abroad. It was firmly believed by Soames, who had made independent inquiries, that Henderson was collecting money in the City and was determined to go forward with a big cash scheme, not necessarily with Pearson. Soames informed Sutton on March 5 that "there is no doubt that great efforts are being made in the City." On the other side Rothschild, who called to see Bell on the same day and asked what his anonymous offer amounted to, assured him that "The Times is yours."

On the evening of the same day, the 5th, Sir Edgar Speyer called on Bell. He, too, said he desired to know what Bell's offer amounted to in terms of cash. It would pay Bell, he took care to add, to deny the connexion of a certain name with his scheme. Bell met this with the statement that he was everlastingly denying names. Speyer hardly considered this a sufficient answer and then, obviously "fishing" for information, thought Bell, said he was aware from several respectable people that there wasn't really the least difficulty in raising money to secure The Times. &c., upon which Bell bowed him out. There was now not a great deal of time for any new financial operations. Ten per cent. of any cash had to be deposited on Monday, March 9. The signs of intervention did not multiply, but anybody interested would be justified in keeping back the deposit until the very last moment of that day. On the 6th, the chances of intervention against the Bell scheme diminished when Speyer telephoned to say that any mention of his name as the organizer of a scheme antagonistic to Bell's was false.

Of Henderson nothing more had been heard, but there was still time for him to act. There was also time and material for further anxieties to be piled upon the head and shoulders of Bell. His report upon the Walter-Henderson conversation had reached Harmsworth at Versailles. He immediately returned to London, arriving on Sunday, the 8th. In view of the equivocal position in which Walter's ignorance placed him, Harmsworth thought it was his duty to take him into his confidence. Bell disagreed and besought him to do nothing. Walter, he said, would be bound to tell somebody whose discretion would be an unknown quantity. If either the Pearson group or the Brodie-Hall group, or Henderson separately, learnt the name the whole Bell-Sterling effort must go for nothing. But Harmsworth insisted that it was a matter of honour, and sat down to write:

March 8th, 1908.

I have returned from the Continent because I have heard directly from an acquaintance of Mr. Walter's that he has given assurances

# WALTER AND "X"

that I am not the person concerned in the offer that is now before the Court of Chancery. As you know, I am that person.

Should the Court approve that offer I shall be one of the many who have the interests of *The Times* at heart, and I should not like Mr. Walter to be in ignorance of my identity.

I beg that you will at once therefore inform him, and that you will provide me to-night with a letter from him, intimating his cognizance of the fact.

In the interests of the anonymity of the paper, I think that this information should be confined for some years to Mr. Walter only.

Bell, under instructions, took this letter to P.H.S. on the same Sunday evening and went to Walter's room. He explained the reasons for his visit, and said that arising from their previous conversation he was now asked to tell him his friend's name in strict confidence, and he gave the reason which induced this course of action. "But," said Walter, "I am quite willing to leave it as it stands." "Nevertheless," answered Bell, "I have to tell you. And I expect you know the name." Walter laughed, "I expect I do." Bell thereupon gave him the letter. Looking at the signature Walter said, "Well, from the little I've seen of him I should think he was all right." He agreed to keep the name secret. On the following day, notwithstanding, he passed on the information to Godfrey and John Walter. They immediately demanded Bell's presence in order to discuss the position. On arrival he furiously protested against the breach of confidence by which Walter, after promising secrecy, had told others, and then added: "But now that you all know, what do you think?"

Walter said that in his opinion Harmsworth was as suitable as any other name, but "it was an infernal nuisance for me to have to let in anybody at all." Godfrey said he didn't like it at all, but "we have got to make the best of it." John Walter kept silence until Bell left. Then to his father and Godfrey he said that as he himself had circulated in good faith the story that the anonymous purchaser was not Harmsworth, he now felt his situation to be impossible. He thought that the dislike which certain proprietors felt for the family would be strengthened if they now backed Harmsworth; and, further, that the objections (so far as they were connected with a genuine feeling for the character of *The Times*) of those who opposed the Pearson plan would be transferred to the Harmsworth plan. He put forward the view that having made themselves responsible for the statement that Harmsworth was not connected with the scheme, they were now bound to withdraw from it, or, if they supported it, to disclose the identity of the purchaser. The family decided

nothing; it all needed to be pondered. But it could not remain undecided for more than twenty-four hours.

Meanwhile Harmsworth's answer to Bell's report to him on his last conversation with the Walters had arrived. The answer contained the following statement for submission to the family:

Will you point out to the three gentlemen who now know the facts that on the maintenance of anonymity everything depends and that anonymity can very easily be maintained?

In any case they would have been obliged to have hidden the change. Supposing for example the paper had been associated with the Tariff Reform League, or with a firm of financiers, or with the Free Traders, there would have been a constant flow of attack. Your plan has the advantage that it has produced an enormous offer from an anonymous someone with experience who will not at any rate compromise The Times by absurd schemes and changes.

And, à propos anonymity, the attitude of the *Daily Telegraph*, during the Tweedmouth discussion the other day, shows how anxious the other newspapers are to kill the journal and thus release a very large amount of advertising.

The maintenance of anonymity would be perfectly easy if the gentlemen concerned were to leave the scene of operations for the period in which the public and the press are searching for names. That is why I came abroad some time ago at, I may say, a particularly awkward moment for me personally.

Would you convey my suggestion to these gentlemen?

After a short time the hue and cry will die down. We can then proceed to reorganise affairs quietly, as in the case of the *Observer*, the circulation of which is now five times as great as when I joined it and the advertising revenue also quintupled. It would not have been possible to have produced those results if there had been much stir at the time. These results have been attained without advertising or undignified schemes. The *Observer* is not *The Times* I know, but it had a certain old-fashioned clientèle, which it has increased.

In effect, therefore, is it necessary for these three gentlemen to place themselves in a position in which they will be questioned either by inquisitive friends or by reporters? When the nine days' wonder is over all will be easy.

Thus Harmsworth counselled silence. On the morning of Monday, March 9, the broad consequences of rejecting his offer were still being anxiously discussed by the family. One of the most significant articles in the Bell-Sterling contract was No. 7, *i.e.*, the item governing any future litigation by Sibley or others against the Walters on account of alleged excessive printing profits made between 1894 and 1908. To

# WALTER ACCEPTS "X"

the family it was, indeed, the most significant of all the articles in the contract. On January 20 at the meeting in Walter's room the figure of annual profit made by the Walters out of printing *The Times* was revealed by the accountant; Sibley had more than once threatened to sue Walter for £100,000. The avowed object of including in the Harmsworth purchase the assets and liabilities of the printing account was to acquire the asset, such as it was, represented by Dr. Sibley's claim; and, by this inclusion, to eliminate the prospective litigation and consequent liability on the part of Arthur and Godfrey Walter.

It was vital, therefore, in the Walters' direct personal interest that they should consider their position very carefully; moreover, if they decided against Harmsworth, it would be prudent to take time before announcing any decision. To disavow Harmsworth, to defeat his intention and thus to gain the support of a valued section of the proprietors might be a good thing so far as it went; but it was even more necessary to defeat Dr. Sibley and Miss Brodie-Hall since both of these were positively known to harbour the intention to attack the printing account. The family came to realize, at last, that so long as the Bell-Sterling agreement included Item No. 7 it would suit the family to support it—Harmsworth or no Harmsworth. Accordingly they made up their minds to accept, though not necessarily yet to recommend to others, the scheme that included Harmsworth, Bell and Item No. 7.

But on Monday afternoon there came an unwelcome surprise. The Judge, having before him the affidavits and claims of Dr. Sibley, declined to sanction the Bell-Sterling schedule if it included any such item as No. 7, relating to the assets and liabilities of the Walter's printing business. But to exclude Item No. 7 would open up for Arthur Walter and his brother long and costly litigation with the possibility, though neither of them would have admitted it, of an adverse verdict. Hence Walter now came to look upon Harmsworth with a more favourable eve than before. When, therefore, that same afternoon, Bell announced his intention of appealing against the Judge's decision Walter was half convinced that it would pay him to give his open support to Harmsworth: but with the experience of the Pearson incident fresh in his mind, he could not overlook the opposition which Harmsworth's name must arouse within and without the office. He realized at last the need for secrecy and circumspection. If The Times must risk something by its connexion with Harmsworth he, personally, as well as Godfrey and John, had everything to gain-if only Bell's appeal against the Judge's decision were to succeed. But what would be the effect upon public opinion when it came out, as some day it must, that Walter had sold *The Times* to an anonymous purchaser whom he secretly knew to be none other than the arch Yellow Pressman Alfred Harmsworth?

For advice in this quandary Walter turned to Buckle. The Chief Proprietor took the view that he was entitled to give the Editor of The Times the information upon which he could form an opinion. He looked upon Buckle, too, as an older servant of the paper than Bell; also, by reason of his position, as more representative of public opinion. For these reasons Walter informed Buckle of the identity of the anonymous purchaser. On March 11, the following day, the Editor's considered reply (marked "Private") stated that the proposal to invite Harmsworth was "a bitter pill to swallow." The future anyhow was alarming, and if it was true that Harmsworth was inevitable the fact must be accepted. Buckle did not think Walter could be blamed for accepting a scheme which he could not decline without doing greater harm to all the interests involved. If the staff held together, he thought, they could resist "any insidious attempts of Bell's principal to work mischief." This was unexpectedly reassuring. It seemed that Buckle had taken the news much less tragically than Walter had feared.

Buckle, in fact, was much more upset than he let Walter see: and he gave Bell an unambiguous account of his feelings. In great distress he told him that the Harmsworth scheme was "only less painful than the Pearson." Bell was not then greatly interested in Buckle's comparative statement: he did fear that the view he expressed might fairly represent what the general view would be when the facts came out. For the present, therefore, on absolutely no account whatsoever must the name of Harmsworth be so much as whispered, and Bell was furious that Walter had revealed Harmsworth's identity to Buckle after his protests against his telling Godfrey and John. He retorted to Buckle that Pearson uncontrolled was a very much more "painful" thing than Harmsworth controlled. Forgetting, or disregarding, the incident at Park Crescent on February 9 in which Sutton had extracted from him an undertaking to act under Harmsworth's "absolute instructions," he proceeded to enlarge the sphere of the Manager's and the Editor's and the Foreign Director's independence. But while Buckle's scruples were thus for the time being overborne he insisted that his colleagues had a right to know the name of the future controller of the paper. The revelation by Buckle of Harmsworth's identity to Monypenny (Chirol and Capper were abroad) followed. The consequence, as Bell apprehended, was a vast amount of discussion within the editorial bosom with increasingly grave risk of leakage. Buckle argued the difficulty of supporting a candidate against whom all in the office had long protested. Secret debates went on for a fortnight. John Walter, too, insisted upon Sterling's being informed of the name. Bell's answer to criticism of his plan was that he didn't pretend it was an ideal arrangement; of course there were dangers, but they would be reduced if all worked together. The worst blow to The Times and to the staff, he said, was struck when Walter rejected the first scheme which he, with Hooper and Jackson, had put forward in July. 1907. He reiterated to Walter and Buckle that the only alternative to a scheme which brought in Harmsworth under control was a new scheme which brought in Harmsworth under no control. Again, what the "control" amounted to was not exactly defined. At the very least it meant the continuance of Bell, Buckle and Chirol in their respective positions.

That this least might also be the most was, perhaps, even after Sutton's visit, hardly realized by Bell. In any case he confided the incident to nobody. It was not in his interest to discuss with Walter the degree of control to which Harmsworth had agreed, as Bell thought, to submit; although it was in Harmsworth's interest to maintain Walter's power over the section of the proprietors favourable to him. And to make secure both Walter, and Walter's party's, support it was vital to get Buckle to see that there was a great difference between Pearson and Harmsworth. From Buckle's point of view, Pearson, however objectionable as a hustler, and as a Tariff Reformer, was redeemed by his Fresh Air Fund and other philanthropic activities. Like Buckle he was the son of a country vicar; like Buckle he was a Wykehamist. Bell, on his side, laid stress on the control that Harmsworth had submitted to, and emphasized to Buckle the warning that in the event of Pearson's success the whole of the editorial staff with two exceptions, neither being the Editor, were to be cleared out. There may have been exaggeration here, but Buckle learnt independently that his post had already been tentatively offered to Spender, whereas Bell, in the name of Harmsworth, was able to assure Buckle of his retention. Bell hardly believed that Pearson was still seriously interested in securing The Times by means of a new scheme, but the possibility existed. By these arguments he succeeded in breaking down Buckle's opposition. On March 12, or 13, it seemed clear that objection from this

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;Spender called. He has been invited to edit *The Tribune*. This had to be communicated to Pearson, for if *The Times* want him they must hurry."

Esher, *Journals*, January 30th, 1908. (II, 279.)

quarter, or from any of the Walters, could not gather enough strength to delay the verdict. The Judge was due to give immediate judgment upon the schemes before the Court and upon the appeal of Bell against the decision to disallow the inclusion of Item No. 7. The original month's adjournment from February 14 was extended for two days in order to avoid a Saturday sitting. March 16 was the final day. Walter who, in his capacity as Receiver and Manager (as appointed on July 31, 1907), had recommended the Bell-Sterling scheme to the proprietors on February 19, did not formally accept it for himself until March 14. Moved by Bell's firmness in the matter of Item No. 7, he then signed an affidavit stating that in his opinion the Bell-Sterling contract was highly beneficial to the proprietors. He added that in his judgment "it would be disastrous to the interest of all the proprietors if this contract is not confirmed and the property is put up to public competition."

By this time, i.e., March 14, Bell and Soames had satisfied themselves that the proportion of the proprietors (including the Walters) who were favourable to the scheme amounted, in terms of shares, to twelve whole shares and nine-sixteenths out of the original sixteen shares into which John Walter I had divided the property; there were two whole shares and one-sixteenth (including Miss Brodie-Hall and Dr. Sibley) that were hostile; one share and five-sixteenths were neutral. The vote based upon holding therefore was favourable by at least six to one and Bell's position seemed secure. Nevertheless, the prospects of the scheme depended, in large part, upon the sum it offered the proprietors for their property. The chance that another purchaser might yet intervene was also dependent, in large part, upon the degree to which the sum he offered was in fact regarded as the "best price" for the property. Walter told the proprietors that he doubted whether "so large a price as the sum now offered" would be obtained if the paper was put up to public auction. In such an auction, too, the character of The Times was of no interest; an auction was a matter of business—i.e., of money. An offer in shares, with no matter what guarantees for the continuity of the paper's character, would be put aside by the Judge in favour of "the best price" in cash without guarantees. The best price and its availability in cash was therefore the combination by which any of the schemes must ultimately stand or fall.

In the second week of March there were three schemes besides Bell and Sterling's. First, Pearson, who had withdrawn from the negotiations with Walter on February 14, was, despite appearances and the scepticism of Bell and others, engaged in a new effort. He had been seen by a Press Association representative on February 18. Asked if he had any statement to make regarding reports that were current, he said that while it was true that at the end of the previous week he had felt himself compelled to notify the Messrs. Walter that he must withdraw from the arrangement he had made with them, it was not a fact that he had withdrawn from all negotiations with regard to the future of The Times. The statement was an obvious invitation to proprietors with shares, and outsiders with money, to join Pearson and his friends in an effort, this time independently of Walter, to outbid other would-be purchasers. Pearson saw several proprietors and obtained a measure of support. He was well aware that while his breach with Walter was now a recommendation with certain proprietors, the essence of success with the majority lay in the amount of money he was able to command. The guarantees for the character of the paper had been inserted in the Walter-Pearson agreement of January by the insistence of Walter. With a free hand and, it seemed, adequate money, he now felt more confident of making The Times pay. By February 21 it was known to the smaller proprietors that, as one wired to another, "Pearson intends to outbid everyone and obtain the paper." His moves at last became known to Harmsworth through Jackson; but no details were discoverable.

In the second place stood Miss Brodie-Hall's scheme. It had advanced to the stage of being put into print. The capital of the Company was to be £850,000. The prospectus bound the Company to "maintain the prestige of The Times as a paper of the highest tone and character seeking to uphold the Empire and the British Constitution." The first manager of the Company was to be selected by the Directors, who were to be seven, including their Chairman, Walter. Of these seven, Arthur and Godfrey Walter, with two others, were to be nominated by the subscribers to the First Preference Shares and three by the proprietors (other than the two Walters) who were allotted the Second Preference Shares. These two blocks of shares amounted to £180,000 and £350,000 respectively, of which the first only was subscribed in cash. Out of that cash there were to be paid the whole of the costs of Sibley v. Walter, and of the promotion of the Company, and other outstanding costs. It was not said from whom the bulk of the cash had been obtained; but the money, such as it was, had been found principally by Miss Brodie-Hall's particular friends in the circle of the Wiener Bank Verein: Messrs. Koch and Speyer, the firm, as Bell verified from Steed, employed by the German Government to subsidize in their political interest certain Viennese newspapers. Miss Brodie-Hall's scheme might well be said to have an awkward political background, but it was just as legitimate for any British subject at that time to espouse a pro-German policy as its opposite. The most awkward feature was financial. The balance of the capital issue of £850,000 after the First and Second Preference Shares was the block of £320,000 Ordinary Shares which were to be offered publicly. Such shares might get into the hands of trade rivals or other undesirable holders. These facts became known to Jackson and Bell through Soames.

The Brodie-Hall scheme, notwithstanding its shortcomings, had to be taken seriously. Bell's earlier and disappointing attempts to interest his personal friends in the reconstruction of the paper included, it has been seen, conferences with Sir Hugh Bell, a prosperous ironmaster, an old friend, a known well-wisher of *The Times* and a friend also of Chirol's. He had also vainly tried to persuade Miss Brodie-Hall to abandon her opposition to himself and his own scheme. When Chirol first spoke to Sir Hugh about *The Times* he found that he had already been approached, with other City men, by Sharp and Benest, who were drafting the scheme for Miss Brodie-Hall in association with Messrs. Panmure, Gordon and Co., the well-known financiers. Later when offered a seat on the Board of that company Sir Hugh made the suggestion that it and Moberly Bell's company should be combined. Bell's reply to this suggestion of February 8, 1908, needs to be read:

Now as regards the idea of an amalgamation of the two schemes, I have, after much consideration, come to the conclusion that I cannot advise it. To be perfectly frank, I do not like the Stock Exchange element about it with which you have nothing to do. [ ] Koch [de Gooreynd] is a man whom I do not know; from Chirol I hear that he is a man who is much in international finance, who occasionally has given us perfectly correct information, which we have published. It is quite natural and fair that that information should accord with his financial interests. So long as what he tells us is correct we have no ground for complaint—it is not his business to give us information which goes against his interest, but——, well it is not the sort of help we want.

[Sir Edgar] Speyer again I know slightly and the little I know is not unfavourable, but he is too distinctly a city man like Henderson (Pearson's backer) and one who has recently got—perhaps through no fault of his own—into a disagreeable position.

These men perfectly naturally and perfectly honestly want to make money out of floating *The Times*, they will find money, which will be

### THE GERMAN BID

a first charge on the profits and the proprietors can have what remains. The same applies to the Pearson scheme though that scheme has the greater disadvantage of Pearson himself. On the other hand your scheme is avowedly a scheme to capture *The Times* in a certain interest. That interest may be the wisest and the most politic, but still it is the buying of *The Times* to support a certain party or section of a party. It controls the editor and to that extent is a complete departure from all the traditions of *The Times*. To parody Magee, I prefer *The Times* wrong and independent to *The Times* right and shackled.

No amalgamation, therefore, took place and hence there were bound to be at least two schemes beside Bell and Sterling's before the Court. Thirdly, there was an intention, it can hardly be called a plan, shared by Dr. Sibley and a number forming the most irreconcilable anti-Walter party to work towards a public sale of the property. In their behalf, Messrs. Willis and Willis circularized the proprietors, inserted letters in the newspapers and otherwise endeavoured to bring in moneyed support from any source without the slightest guarantee of the continuity of the character of *The Times*. These facts, being semi-public, were also known to Bell and Jackson.

Out of these three schemes Bell recognized the Brodie-Hall scheme with the backing of Speyer and Koch as the substantial rival to himself. He doubted if Pearson, even with Henderson, could raise more than Speyer and Koch. It was necessary, however, to be sure. Bell and Jackson accordingly put agents at work in the City during the fortnight or more between the middle of February and the beginning of March. They noted the efforts and estimated the success of the financiers who were known to be endeavouring to collect money in behalf of their respective clients. Their report was that Pearson was working hard and that each group was determined to outbid the other. Miss Brodie-Hall preferred Bell to win if she lost; Bell preferred her scheme to Pearson's. There existed, possibly, the basis of a compromise; but it would be with Koch and Speyer. Bell knew well that Miss Brodie-Hall would object to his continuance as Manager or Managing Director of any new company. More than ever, therefore, Bell was determined to win by himself. Harmsworth, in France still, well aware of the dangers of competition and the prospect it opened of his being compelled to pay a far higher price than the property was worth, or could later be made to recover even by the most expert management, was in favour of reducing the risk. From Versailles he wrote to Bell on the eleventh:

In regard to Miss B.-H. Should not every facility be offered to her to ascertain the facts? She is evidently one of those very suspicious people who believe that affairs are in a better condition than they really are. She is also very inquisitive, because it was obviously she who sent Mr. Koch to my House. And as I told you, Mr. Koch has been again inquiring through Mr. Dudley Ryder and Mr. Dudley Ryder has been inquiring of friends of mine. This is not a time for combativeness.

There was, nevertheless, no hesitation in Harmsworth's mind. Bell had no complaint to make of any lack of support. Harmsworth was no less determined than he to see that the control of *The Times* went neither to Pearson nor to anybody else. The Bell-Sterling-Harmsworth scheme must win.

The cash offered by Bell's scheme in behalf of the purchaser of The Times was £320,000 of which a ten per cent. deposit had already been prepared in the name of Bell and Sterling and lay ready to be paid into Court at a moment's notice. It was at least this entire cash sum that both Pearson and Miss Brodie-Hall had immediately to outbid and outplace. The valuation upon which Mrs. Sibley had transferred her remaining fractions of shares to Godfrey Walter in 1898 justified only a total valuation of £206,000, which was the sum that Arthur Walter considered both fair and prudent. The valuation made by Messrs. Deloitte and Plender in behalf of Pearson was £260,000, which was the sum accepted as a basis in Miss Brodie-Hall's scheme. When Bell first discussed figures with Harmsworth he naturally gave him particulars, as fully as he knew them, of the competing schemes and of the extent of the resources behind them. He gave it as his opinion that as an investment the price of £260,000 for The Times was more than its value. Miss Brodie-Hall, however, was inclined to think that The Times "under proper management" was worth a good deal more. Much of the attraction which her scheme possessed for investors lay in the estimate of future gains. Harmsworth was quick to point out to Bell that Miss Brodie-Hall was badly advised if she thought that The Times was, or was likely to be, a good speculation. He advised Bell on the eleventh that:

Speaking commercially, from a business point of view, the offer we have made is ridiculous and I should intimate to Mr. Plender (i.e., in Court as witness) that if he does not tell the truth there is no chance of any further connection with him. As Mr. Plender is the auditor of one of my businesses, a very flourishing one, he must know that as a commercial proposition *The Times* is hopeless. That is why no other offers have been made and why, in the opinion of a competent judge, a man who has had much to do with similar negotiations, none

### ANXIOUS DAYS

will be made despite the unique prestige of the journal. The most recent figures should be placed before Miss B.-H.'s accountants.

Notwithstanding, Bell said, this commonsense view of the commercial situation of The Times, the existence of resourceful competitors might render it prudent to offer more than that sum. Bell was soon justified. Information suddenly given to Sutton by Jackson revealed a possibility of competition it would be foolish to ignore. While on February 26 Sutton had wired Harmsworth at Boulogne "Everything splendid no further offers," two days later he learnt that Henderson was going to put in a large cash offer. "Great care necessary coming ten days" Sutton wired to Harmsworth. Soames's inquiries, too, now led him to believe that Henderson's cash would probably mature, and Harmsworth at Rheims on March 3 was so advised. It was, at last, now a question of "saving The Times" for Harmsworth, Walter and Bell. It seemed clear that the only way to be sure of saving The Times was to give more. Bell had already suggested the sum of £300,000 to Harmsworth, who had increased it to £320,000. He had from the first been willing, as he officially instructed Hooper and Jackson on February 3, probably without Bell's knowledge, to go to £400,000.

The cash offer of £320,000 was first laid before the Court on March 2; it was to be confirmed by March 9, provided no larger sum was offered by that time, and if the contrary happened, the amount was to be reconsidered. On the due date, however, the confirmation was reserved on account of the Judge's ruling, given the same afternoon, against the inclusion of Item No. 7. Sutton left London on that evening for a consultation at Fontainebleau, where Harmsworth had now arrived. He reported that it was increasingly thought that the Judge would approve the best price and that Bell's appeal on the printing item would succeed. The price of £320,000, which included Item No. 7, was high on March 2 and on March 9. It was hoped that this sum would be sufficient, but nothing was certain. Sutton's conference with Harmsworth, which achieved a reaffirmation of the policy of "saving The Times," meant that the figure would be raised if need be.

As week followed week *The Times* suffered acutely from publicity. All the newspapers gave prominence to special articles under such headlines as "*The Times* for Sale"; "A Tradition for Sale"; "*The Times* up for Auction" and other similar phrases which encouraged the public to believe that a century-and-a-

quarter's continuity was about to be broken. The goodwill was in fact vanishing; circulation was decreasing, advertising was failing, the revenue was falling; the overdraft at the bank was swelling. The situation is described in an affidavit made by Bell on March 13 when engaged in his effort to reverse the Judge's ruling that Item No. 7 covering the assets and liabilities of the printing business should be excluded from the sale:

In my opinion the position is very much worse than when I entered into the Bell-Sterling Contract and I doubt whether the assets apart from the Claim against Messrs. Walter would now meet the liabilities. The sum of £320,000 that I have offered for the goodwill of The Times Newspaper and all other the assets of the Proprietors is and was intended to be a very excessive price with a view of satisfying all the Proprietors and ensuring its immediate acceptance and thus putting an end to the present disastrous state of affairs and so saving The Times and ensuring its being continued in the same independent manner as heretofore, a result which I and the Gentlemen who have come to my assistance in finding the money believed could not be obtained unless this Action and all litigation was at once put an end to and an announcement made as quickly as possible that The Times will be continued under the same management and on the same independent lines as heretofore and I and they now very much doubt having regard to all that has happened since the date when I entered into the Contract with General Sterling whether it is now possible to achieve our object and save The Times Newspaper, and the Gentlemen who have found the said sum of £320,000 are not willing to give up any single Asset nor to purchase at all if the Contract is altered by excluding item 7 in the Certificate of Assets thus leaving it open for the litigation to continue.

Finally Bell sought to strengthen the force of his affidavit by stating that:

If the present conditions are continued I think it right to say as assistant Manager under Mr. Arthur Fraser Walter that unless large further sums of cash are provided the publication of *The Times* Newspaper and the whole business of *The Times* must cease in the course of a few weeks.

This affidavit, put in on Friday, was a last minute effort. On Sunday night Sutton returned from another visit to Harmsworth with new instructions. They read as follows:

15.3.08.

The decision we have arrived at is this:

1. We are to insist in Court on the maintenance of the contract as it is with Clause 7 included permitting only minor alterations suggested by the Judge at the price of £320.[000].

# "X" RAISES HIS FIGURE

- 2. If the Judge will not agree to these terms, we are to state that we consider the decision a refusal to our offer; and we then and there make a cash offer for the copyright of *The Times* and allied publications. I authorise you to offer £330.[000], but in the unlikely event of competition you may go to £400.[000].
- 3. If the Judge will not consent to that we will agree to confirmation of the Contract as it stands, but with the omission of Clause 7, with the alteration of the purchase price to £272.[000], that is say we pay 17 instead of 20 for each of the 16 shares in *The Times*.

These three suggestions are conditional upon the arrangement being confirmed on Monday [March 16], and the Judge permitting us to commence its completion on Tuesday. It is common knowledge that the business of *The Times* is being adversely affected by the present Newspaper comments and aspersions.

Sutton gave Bell this document on Sunday night, March 15. There were now only a few hours left. Sutton had learnt that Pearson had gone to Sicily, which seemed suspicious. The Judge was due to give his order on the following day, Monday the 16th. Until that time Pearson, Miss Brodie-Hall, Dr. Sibley, or another was still competent to intervene effectively against Harmsworth; only, however, if their schemes provided for the payment of a better price than Bell was offering, including the offer to bring the money in Court.

On Monday, counsel representing Miss Brodie-Hall asked for a further adjournment as the accounts had not been properly examined. The Judge disagreed. He called for any new offers. This was the climax. The call went unanswered. Bell had won; there was no appeal within twenty-four hours. The Times had been "saved." Order was forthwith made that the conditional contract between Sterling and Bell should be carried into effect and that the deposit of £32,000 should be paid into Court; further that Bell should lodge the balance within a week. Three hundred and twenty banknotes were counted out and handed over in exchange for a certificate in form of the Judge's order. By ordering in this form, i.e., in approving the Bell-Sterling contract as a whole, the Judge included the entire schedule with Item No. 7 referring to the printing profits.

Like the personality of the purchaser, the purchase price of £320,000, the assets and liabilities of the printing business were destined to provoke bitter discussions between the old and the new régime, but on that day the controversy begun by Mrs. Sibley in 1885 was stilled. The Judge approved Bell's draft of a notice to be printed in *The Times* and circulated in the Press.

He also added that mention in the Press of anything that had occurred that day would be treated as contempt of Court. March 16. therefore, registered a complete victory for the anonymous scheme. At half-past four, Bell wired Harmsworth at Versailles and Walter at Bear Wood the laconic message: GONE THROUGH AS WE WANTED. To Harmsworth, he confirmed in a hurried letter, adding a line of thanks: "I hope it is unnecessary for me to say again how grateful I am to you." It was a personal statement. Bell had defeated Pearson and the scheme which involved his public dismissal from the management. The other gains were that Harmsworth had secured the control for £80,000 less than he had been willing to pay. Walter had retained a connexion as Chairman, and had been saved from an action by Dr. Sibley for the restitution of £100,000 on account of alleged excessive printing profits. Buckle, Chirol, Monypenny and Capper were to retain their positions. In a word, Bell had "saved" The Times by securing control of it for the Chief of the Associated Newspapers Limited, of the Amalgamated Press Limited, &c., &c., &c., &c., by the retention of Arthur Walter as Chairman and himself, Bell, as Managing Director of the new limited company, whose board was to consist of members of the editorial staff.

The sale, or "agreement" to use the preferred term, was thus calmly reported to the readers of *The Times* on Tuesday, March 17, 1908:

His Lordship Mr. Justice Warrington yesterday made an order sanctioning an agreement under which a company will be forthwith formed to take over the business of the publication of *The Times* newspaper and the undertakings carried on in connexion therewith. Mr. Walter will be Chairman of the Board of Directors, which will consist solely of existing members of the Staff—Mr. George Earle Buckle, Mr. Valentine Chirol, Mr. William Flavelle Monypenny, with Mr. Moberly Bell as Managing Director. No shares will be offered to the public.

There will be no change whatever in the political or editorial direction of the paper, which will be conducted by the same Staff on the independent lines pursued uninterruptedly for so many years.

The world accepted the statement. Bell's success in getting the Press Association to circulate the Judge's warning that any account of the proceedings would be treated as contempt of Court was rewarded. Only the *Daily Chronicle* published a forecast of the name of the anonymous purchaser. It was the correct name but nobody believed it. The necessity to preserve anonymity

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# "X" AND ARTHUR WALTER WIN

was now greater than ever since the proprietors had until the night to appeal. Nothing came and the "agreement" was now beyond appeal. Sutton therefore was busy answering Press inquiries: Harmsworth was still away and nothing was known of his connexion with the purchase.

The notice in *The Times* was not of a kind to induce a flood of congratulations from the public. Nevertheless, a large number, Lord Rosebery, Sir Evelyn Wood, Mr. Whitelaw Reid, Baron de Reuter, Colonel Harvey, among them, wrote to Bell and Buckle testifying to their pleasure that the paper had both overcome its difficulties and avoided an unwelcome solution. John Morley, as the most eminent of living journalists of the old school, wrote an understanding letter to Buckle:

I rejoice that the ruinous schemes of a few weeks ago have been frustrated, and that you are where you were. A real public misfortune has been avoided, and you may have been rather gratified at the testimony so universally furnished to the hold your Olympian Organ has upon the world's imagination and esteem.

No public congratulations were addressed to Harmsworth. None could be sent save by the few who were in the secret. All told they were Sutton, Kennedy Jones, Bell, the Walters, Buckle, Soames, Sterling, Chirol, and, of course, the two Americans. Jackson, employing still the code names in which the negotiations had from the start been conducted, gave Harmsworth great pleasure by his letter:

Monday Eve.

# Dear Admiral Atlantic

I must send you just a line to say how very glad I am that matters have come to such a satisfactory conclusion to-day.

Not only the British public but all friends of Great Britain will some day know what a great good you have done for the nation and it will be appreciated.

Yours sincerely

ADELAIDE OF DEMERARA

I retain our anonymity as I am not sure of your movements from now on.

The anonymity was, indeed, to be kept secret. From January 8 personal names had never been mentioned. The few in the office who knew the correct name never, even among themselves, used it. Harmsworth was always "X." The others stuck to the code. Atlantic (Harmsworth), Abigail (Harold Harmsworth), Buffalo (Sutton), Alberta (Kennedy Jones), Canton (Bell), Adelaide (Hooper), Demerara (Jackson), Navarino (Soames), Manitoba

(Walter), Cenotaph (P.H.S.) occur most frequently. Some of these names had been long established in Carmelite House and Fleetway House correspondence; others have the air of being the inventions of Harmsworth (responsible perhaps for "Cenotaph"), Hooper and Bell. Between Harmsworth and Sutton the business was known as Operation "Scotland." After the 10th the anonymity was maintained even more strictly. Bell, formerly "Canton" and next "Ball," wrote thus to Atlantic on March 19:

If you would care to see me I will cross over Friday afternoon or Saturday morning and stay over Sunday. A wire tomorrow to say 'come' will bring me. But if so don't engage any room. I will come as Mr. Charles Ball and take a room in the Hotel. I shall not recognize you in public but can get into your room like Nicodemus by night, or as opportunity occurs. You might add to your telegram the number of your sitting room so that I shall not have to ask for it. I prefer Ball to Canton because if I met anyone I know the error in name would be a natural one.

The world, and the staff of P.H.S. with it, was unaware that The Times had changed hands. It became the conviction of Buckle and others in the office who had helped Bell to success, that the guarantees he had secured permanently protected the paper from any change. The conviction was confirmed by the notice in the paper. A limited company would now take the place of the old partnership at will. There would be no change in the paper. It would be "conducted by the same staff on the independent lines pursued uninterruptedly for so many years." Nevertheless, the fact remained that the control of the paper had passed out of the hands of the Walter family. It is true that the control had been purchased by "X" only with the aid of the Walters and that the business, if not the "political and editorial direction," was in the hands of the Board of Directors. And this was the essence of the "agreement." But what "X" had agreed with now he might disagree with in the future. The possibility was known and reckoned with by Bell. Everything, now depended upon his power to control "X." That was so immense a change in the Manager's (now Managing Director's) position as to amount to a revolution in the constitution of Printing House Square. Moreover, at the time of the transfer, Bell was the only man who knew "X." Walter had not seen him since 1902. The editorial staff had vet to make his personal acquaintance.

# **XVIII**

# NORTHCLIFFE

TOON after the transfer of The Times members of the editorial staff were invited to meet Lord Northcliffe at Indianer. Those who sat near him saw him eating little and drinking only a glass or two of champagne. After dinner some of the company were brought to him one by one for introduction. They beheld a big, heavy man of forty-three sitting humped and slack, his eyes hidden by dark glasses in the tortoiseshell frames that were then new, his mouth drooping in a heavy jowl, his pale, clean-shaven face and expression in repose being an exaggerated likeness of a portrait of his mother, Mrs. Harmsworth. He looked as if his thoughts were far away. It was early days yet for him to be suspected of acting before The Times editorial staff the part of the mature thinker, remote from the affairs of the moment and the very opposite of the Yankee Yellow Pressman that he expected them to mistake him for. The staff had heard that he was in poor health, and troubled, in particular, with his eyesight. Rumour told of a fear of blindness and his flight from that fear by night-long drives in his motor-car. All the more surprising, therefore, was the discovery that this apparently bored and indifferent stranger had a good knowledge of the work being done by each man that he was talking to, and could mention some one article his hearer had written, or subject in which he was engaged. He would at least appear to be interested. True, that interest seemed to fade away very soon, and meanwhile the spectacled eyes and the heavy face remained a mask; but the voice, always lowly intoned, was alive. In days before the common use of the microphone (as, for instance, a Madison Square audience in New York was to learn during the war of 1914-18) he could not make himself heard in a great place; but close at hand his lowest murmur had colour and life in it. This voice that could enchant a sensitive ear was a power of which he only appeared to be unaware. He never turned it on like an actor; but it served him greatly, radiating a personal charm far more powerful than any air of greatness.

### NORTHCLIFFE

In after years the company at that dinner of The Times staff was to see him looking very much younger and livelier-in fair mood or in foul. His eyes, well set in his head, bright and steady. remained fine; his hair was brown and sleek (he professed to know "what to do about it," which was part of his zest for being up to special dodges about everything); his smile could be very winning. Like most men over-athletic and spare-living in youth, he was heavy in build, and inclined to stoutness. He would joke about it. "I," said one of his private letters, "was the fat man who waved to you from the train at Avignon"; and during the war of 1914-18 he delighted in describing the struggles of his little electric brougham, with himself as passenger. to get him about. When he was thinking he was apt to look cross or puzzled rather than grave or wise. But the audacity and violence of his energy through years of incessant effort in all fields of journalism left no trace on his features. He remained handsome; but what gave him most distinction was the very smoothness that belied his intense vitality. He seemed able to turn out the light within him. As a young man he had been dressy. In his maturity country clothes suited his face and figure better than town clothes. Stiff collars and tailed coats seemed to fidget him. In a soft collar, a sailor's knot tie, usually spotted and with some red in it, and a lounge suit he could look at once comfortable and scrupulously soigné.

A Bohemian love of ease and simplicity was natural to him. He came more and more to enjoy easy and unpretentious company. He had something of Prince Hal's weakness for the society of his inferiors in station. True, he lacked a Falstaff to amuse him; but he was a master of mischief at teasing and baiting; he could always get some fun out of a quite friendly exploitation of the foreign ways of a Continental body-servant, or the personal follies of this or that paid member of his household, who was acting unawares as his jester. He extracted vast entertainment from the men and customs of Printing House Square. All were thought antiquated. The editorial people in particular were the butts of his wit. They were "Monks," the "Black Friars," the "Brethren." It amused him to teach them the ABC of up-to-date journalism and he embraced the opportunity to make Flanagan and others use the telephone for the first time.

But what, after 1908, he looked for more anxiously than amusement was rest. He was one who could rest better in a back room than in a front. The back room was "quiet." There was no

show about it, and no need to behave. This genuine love of simplicity ran easily in step with a fastidious delight in having the very best example of every material object in which he took a personal interest. He went to infinite pains, for instance, over the details of his motor-cars. Once, at least, he spent some weeks in Paris in order to see in person to the building of the body of his new Rolls-Royce. His regular chauffeur (and personal friend) was a master at the work; but in the summer of 1913, and perhaps in other London seasons, he engaged for town use an eminent driver of racing cars, with incredible skill in getting through traffic. Only the best was good enough; but the best was got and used without the slightest trace of ostentation. It was his employees of the Daily Mail and the Evening News who were ordered to cut a dash and, for the most part, furnished with the means. For himself, the best was good enough only because, being the best, it did its work well and saved him trouble.

The matter of rest and quiet leads inevitably to the other alleviations of his enormous labours, and of the strain imposed on him by the incessant activity of his brain. The consumption of energy called for fuel. His dislike of eating before strangers. especially at formal and public meals, led him sometimes to "stoke" heartily before coming to table; and he liked good food as any hard-working millionaire with a perfect chef ought to. Away from home, he would now and then interest himself keenly in ordering a dinner for a small party at the old Café Anglais in Paris, or some other haunt of the gourmets; but it was possible to suspect that, when he ordered the speciality of the house and of the moment, he took more pleasure in knowing what it was than in eating it. The incessant racing of the engine urged him. as the years went on, to look more and more for distraction rather than for fuel. Fishing, now and then, and golf in any month and in any country, distracted him, but at the price of particular efforts; and what he then craved for was relaxation from effort. And being a strong man of vigorous appetite having early been encouraged to learn his power over women he took his pleasure. But he was never mean or ungenerous. He had particular reasons for disliking the idea of drunkenness, even of conviviality in excess. He would talk against the mid-Victorian Punch dinners and other such gatherings as bibulous and vulgar. But he knew well the value of alcohol to one who had become one of the most accessible of public men. In the United States during Prohibition he would drink gin because it looked like water; and, later, at home he came to count more and more on brandy. Yet no amount of self-

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indulgence could coarsen his fastidiousness in certain matters. Pains were taken not to look gross; he had more than one reason to avoid looking dissipated.

Alfred Harmsworth, his father, was a clever man. By profession he was a barrister; he was also a ready writer of short stories and other light literature. But what he best liked doing and did best was talk. It was partly in the hope of putting him out of reach of convivial talkers like himself that Mrs. Harmsworth induced him to leave Dublin and come to London. In London he found no lack of opportunities for talk-intellectual, no doubt, and perhaps brilliant, but, as in Ireland, provocative of spending. The mother of his fifteen children (of whom seven sons and three daughters grew up) belonged to a well-connected family of County Down. She was well educated and well read, had travelled in her youth and was a talented and trained musician. She had much of the tenacity characteristic of the northern Irish, and she was unboundedly ambitious. The titles and the wealth that accrued to her sons seemed to her rather less than their due. especially in the case of her eldest boy, with whose inmost being her own was in close sympathy. Like her, he reasoned little, but leaped to conclusions by instinct, and he valued her advice above all the world's. His dependence upon her, shown by his daily communication with her, in person, by letter, telephone or telegram, was the central fact of his life. One result of this matriarchal power was that from no other woman could he endure a touch of restraint. The attempt even to advise him might put the adviser into rivalry with his mother, and that meant certain defeat. Power over him could only be attained by women who would allow him to believe that he was going his own way, and would encourage him to be at his ease while they shared with him the informality of the quiet back room.

His relations with his father are not so obvious, but they can be discerned. He saw that, like his father, he himself lacked intellectual purpose and, even more than his father, abounded in intellectual facility. He saw, when he was still a schoolboy of fifteen, his father's brilliance and popularity crash in a nervous breakdown, leaving himself to be the acting head and breadwinner of a large family. All his life he suffered less from lack of a full education than from the consciousness that he lacked it. He knew himself to be immensely superior to most men in brain-power, yet felt himself mysteriously unequal to some of them, even in Printing House Square. Near the end of his life he said to a friend:

# NORTHCLIFFE'S NATURALNESS

The important thing is poise . . . Poise in all things and at all times. . . . I have suffered from one disability throughout my career . . . I suffer from the fact that I was not at Oxford. But not for three years. That is too much. One year is quite enough. . . .

When his friend asked him whether, if he had gone to Oxford, he would have then been where he was, he snapped: "That is not the question." But the social poise that he admired in others would hardly have restrained the raging activity that drove him on and on. He laboured but never for love of personal reward in money or in titles. It was part of his respect for "the best." His intellectual vision may have been limited but he had no taste for the second-rate and no interest in eccentricity.

There was nothing in his taste, or in his tastes, to mark him off from the fellow-creatures among whom he wished to feel in a position of poise. The lust for speed and record-breaking on his bicycle in boyhood and in his motor-cars in the early days of motoring did not kill in him a love of the country in conventional English fashion. If his dog must be the first of its kind to be seen in England, and if the American robin must be acclimatized at Sutton Place, he honestly liked dogs and birds. From tarpon to trout, he could command the best fishing in the world, and the best tackle (though his eyesight hampered him in tying the smaller flies); but at angling—a sport which he loved—he was a master. The first salmon that he ever caught on the Tay (a 32-pounder) was no sooner gaffed, landed and weighed than he caught it up in his arms and embraced it. Yet, keen fisherman as he was, he was as generous in that as in other relations of private life. His fishing guests bear witness that he was the most unselfish of hosts, always giving them the pick of the sport. His golf, again, may have been taken up at doctor's orders, and as part of his precautions against corpulence, but this did not prevent his concentrating on the game with exemplary perseverance and humility. Let it be added that he never talked golf-shop or fishing except to brother enthusiasts.

His attitude to the arts was equally conventional. He was proud of his beautiful homes, though unable to appreciate the degree and quality of the beauty achieved in them by the knowledge and taste of Lady Northcliffe, an accepted leader in such things. Restless innovator though he was, he showed no interest in modern art, or in modern furniture and decoration. Old-fashioned printing types, and especially the long f, he could not bear: an old printing-press was to him an outrage on the progress of the craft. He had no similar dislike of old styles

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# NORTHCLIFFE

in furniture and ornament. Whatever share he may have had in the arrangement of the enormous room, adorned with "classicist" decorations, in Carmelite House, in which bound volumes of Answers were ranked below busts of Homer, Socrates, Tacitus and other such, his private room at The Times office was in the best of quiet taste; and when he bought a picture or an etching, which he rarely did, he bought something safe and sober. Only in one art was his gift exceptional, and that was his mother's art of music. He was one of the natural musicians who play the piano by ear.

One other matter there was in which he never allowed his taste, or his judgment, to be deflected by his love of novelty and change—the English language. However he came by it, his love of pure English was with him in boyhood, and remained his throughout life. Formed on the prose of the eighteenth century, his taste inclined to the simple and severe. No one hated "journalese" more than this supreme journalist, nor slang and catchwords more than this man of the moment, nor americanisms than this lover of America. His general curiosity about life embraced the past as well as the present and the future; and the chief purpose of his assiduous reading was to make up for his want of schooling, especially in history. Poetry meant nothing to him. In prose, he was drawn to the classic essayists; to Fielding, Defoe (he was enthusiast for The Storm), and Thackeray; in Dickens he had the normal joy, and his warm admiration for Hardy owed something to the love of the open air which sent him much to books about country life and sport. His main study was history. The Gentleman's Magazine and Notes and Queries were mainly concerned with the past, besides being venerable journals which a new man might be proud to own; and when he bought them he had no intention of killing one and getting rid of the other. From memoirs and local records to the works of the great English historians, he read history in great variety. In 1913, on his last visit to Newfoundland, his chief book was Freeman's Norman Conquest. During the unoccupied days and hours which he liked to spend in bed (he was a great believer in what he called "assuming a horizontal position"), he would invite one or other of his party to come and read to him out of Freeman; and, as he lay still with his eyes shut, it was never safe to assume that he was asleep, or not attending. Any little slip or difficulty—over, for instance, the "panegyrists" of William-would find him derisively awake and alert. Facts would always interest him more than theory. But his study of history may have

## HIS HOBBIES

deepened during the last years of his life, when he was groping after statesmanship, for on his last journey to the United States he was reading, and annotating, the Politics of Aristotle. In these efforts to educate himself he was pertinacious and laborious. His reading, nevertheless, could hardly fail to lack system and continuity. Practical matters, like fishing and motoring, he could master sufficiently to write the Badminton books about them, and there was no limit to his quickness in picking up, and his tenacity in remembering, details of every kind of activity in the world about him. In every man that he met, from the most eminent to the most obscure, he seemed able to discover some piece of knowledge that he had been wanting and now could pounce upon, so that, for instance, a short drive in a hired car in any part of the world could put him in possession of the one thing which the driver could teach him. During his last years he said to a man of his own age rather enviously, "Ah! your mind is still in the receptive stage "-imagining, as it seemed, that his own was not still ravenous for knowledge. Yet he had never learned how to learn. He was stuffed with information, and still sharply acquisitive; but to the end his mind was lacking in coordination and direction.

The lack never hampered him much before he came into The Times. Knowledge to him meant power—indirectly through the wealth and the command of human workers that could be won by spreading knowledge, and directly through the moulding of the public mind. But his eagerness to communicate knowledge to his fellow-members of the insufficiently educated public was by no means all selfish. He felt the right of that public in general, and of particular sections of it—the housewife, the schoolboy, the youngster in love—to knowledge about the world they lived in and an expression of their points of view; and his own emotional and intellectual level was not so high above theirs as to put him out of sympathy. What distinguished him from his own early public was his incredible fertility in ideas, and his skill in hitting off an effective title-a "verbal vignette," as he called it, such as "The Black Strike" for the coal strike of 1912, "The Battle of the Skirts" for some question of women's dress in 1922. Even in private he relied a good deal upon the verbal vignette. Notes for the guidance of a member of his staff flowed freely from his sick bed on the Riviera when once the title of "Valescure pencillings" could be written at the head of each sheet. About a subject, thus successfully ticketed, ideas would crowd into his mind and pour forth in a torrent of precise suggestions and commands;

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and his staffs at Carmelite House were adept at catching the flow.

He had an extraordinarily sympathetic understanding of what the public wanted, and of the proportions in which they wanted it. The personal must always come before the general, the example elbow out the rule. Crime, love, health (especially diet) and clothes—these are what the public wants to read about. A dispute among fox-hunters interests them more than the simultaneous coal-strike. The important thing about a Jewish religious holiday is the large number of top-hats to be seen that week-day in Hampstead—"Top-hats in Hampstead"; and "Silk Stockings in Canterbury" for the central feature of a great festival of commemoration in the Cathedral, which filled the streets and the Close with men in full dress. One other rule was the most important of all. Every day there must be a new "surprise," something to make people talk, something unusual; and, if there was any danger of a lack, it might be necessary to see that something of the desired sort did happen, or even (though only with the utmost care) to do without any foundation in fact.

Such were the ideas of proportion with which this man of forty-three years came into control of The Times. It is probable that he already knew more of the history of The Times than any member of the staff, just as he knew, for instance, that the golf course at Pau was the oldest outside Scotland, except Blackheath and possibly Calcutta. He had formed, at any rate, his views about the journal. In after years he was fond of telling how to Arthur Walter's "What would you do with The Times?" he had promptly replied: "I should make it worth threepence Mr. Walter." When he faced the organization-or was it organism?—itself, he found something new to him. In Carmelite House he ruled. Allowing for a normal amount of disobedience, shirking, and pretence, his orders were obeyed. Most offences against them could be detected and betrayed by those he planted among all ranks and departments. He and his men, moreover, were out upon the same adventure—to make life seem ever more and more exciting to more and more thousands of average minds. In The Times office he found other ideas of proportion. Many of them were the very opposite of his own. The habits of the place were based, he thought, upon the heresy that news improves by keeping; that life became not more but less exciting as every day brought new evidence that nothing was new-to show how little the latest news mattered when seen against the past, of history ancient as well as modern. This was all that

# NORTHCLIFFE AND THE "ATMOSPHERE"

Northcliffe could see in "The Tradition Established" as it existed in the Printing House Square of 1908. Lionel James was forgotten; Russell was far behind; nobody could read *The Times* in the make-up of 1908; the feats of the old news-getting heroes had faded from the memory of those at Carmelite House, who were nearer and dearer to him than anybody was, or would be in Printing House Square.

Though the *Daily Mail* was now ordered to aim at the £1,000-a-year man, not the cab-driver or the factory girl, Carmelite House was still "the dog-fight," not for nothing carried on in that lawless old region, the "Alsatia" of Whitefriars; while *The Times*, shut off from the racket of the street of ink by the old bed of the Fleet River, was "the rest-cure," and the workers in their Blackfriars office were ever the "Brethren," secluded from the world. He knew he would never feel at home in the "atmosphere" of Printing House Square as he did in that of Carmelite House.

During the negotiations for the purchase of *The Times* the red plush sofas of the Hotel Christol at Boulogne had witnessed a watchful patience rare in such an adventurous and restless spirit as his. "X" began his handling of *The Times* editorial and managerial affairs with equal caution; but he must have learned very soon that he was not making his due personal impress. The circulation showed no promise; and in the hands of an Editor who opened all his own letters with his thumb (he "might have made a good Puisne Judge") and of a staff who seemed to take little interest in the great world of common humanity, and least of all in the wide world outside England that so fascinated their travel-loving, insatiably inquisitive proprietor, *The Times* seemed stubbornly determined not to exchange the cloister for the hearth, and still less for his open road.

He knew that the eyes of all journalism and of many outside it were watching lidless for his fate in Printing House Square. Failure there would be defeat indeed, and not a reverse to be majestically wiped out like that of the *Daily Mirror*. It would be a personal failure. From his boyhood he had been accustomed to taking the lead, to being captain (and here it may be said that when he appeared to be taking the credit of other people's work—when he talked of "my *Encyclopaedia*," or of "my *Universal History*"—he was only conferring on it the diploma of his approval by associating it with himself). It was not enough to be known as the controller only of *The Times*, or even as the worthy successor of his admired John Walter II in the struggle for a free press, and of John Walter III in the

### NORTHCLIFFE

mechanical efficiency of the means. He wanted also to be known as the director of its policy, as the one man capable of "solving the problem of The Times." But he had larger than personal grounds for anxiety, and higher motives which must not be overlooked or denied him. By stages that it might not now be possible to trace, his young, natural love of England and his pride in giving the great public a voice through his adored craft of journalism, had mated together, to the engendering of an impersonal patriotism. His sense of statesmanship could not ignore the danger from Germany, the need of a strong and friendly Imperial association, and steady friendship with the United States. This sense of his was genuine and urgent. By 1908 he could not fail to see that, with his newspapers behind him, he was a power in the land. If that power could be known to include the then out-of-date paper, The Times, it would be beyond measure increased. His ambition was not selfish or greedy at any time. The bulk of the enormous damages granted against the Daily Mail in the Lever libel action came in greatest part out of his pocket. But when he is found ready to throw down his own personal power, together with the pillars that upheld it, and ready to see The Times and the Daily Mail publicly dishonoured and burned, rather than surrender his views about the war, he is above suspicion of personal motives. That heroic hour was yet some years ahead; but he was not much less in earnest in his early days with The Times.

Open opposition he could tackle openly—and yield to when he knew that he must. Indifference called out in him all the wiliness that had made him "the Dodger" at the rugby game at school. The effect of it upon a man naturally friendly, a wellwisher of his kind, one who liked to see happy faces about him (especially when he himself was the cause of the happiness). was to bring into action all that was crafty, suspicious, and vindictive in his character. By means mainly secret, he set to work to cleave fissures in the smooth ring of indifference that barred him out of the inner consciousness of The Times. His relations with The Times never recovered from the early troubles and disappointments. He had formed, naturally enough, wrong notions about particular members of the staff, of which he allowed no subsequent experience to disabuse him. As a stranger in the office, he made enemies by taking enmity for granted, and then setting one enemy to hamper the machinations of another. Some of the best men in the office saw in him something that, in lovalty to the standards of The Times they felt they must resist. The higher his hopes and dreams had soared, the deeper was the

### HIS PERSONAL AMBITION

dejection that turned him, not altogether consciously, against them, and to the end prevented him from giving The Times a fair chance. The long history of the paper, and the ground of first principles out of which it grew, gave independence and strength to men whom he expected to be easily manageable. Again and again he found differences where he counted on agreement; and once at least he passed over a man whose strength he feared only to pitch on one stronger still. That he should wish to preside over the paper's fortunes was natural and also just. But he wished also to dominate and not merely to direct its policy; he would make it his personal organ; and this the old family, the Editor, the Manager and leading members of the editorial staff felt bound to prevent. It was a supreme test of the old traditions, deriving from John Walter II and III, from Barnes and Delane. The adjustment of The Times to the needs of a twentieth-century constituency would, in the opinion of the "Brethren," fail if The Times ceased to possess certain qualities that it had only possessed, and could only retain, if a certain corporate attitude of mind was given explicit recognition.

Northcliffe given sole possession of an entirely subservient staff of Printing House Square, having intact his unbroken reverence for the idea of *The Times*, might have used the paper honourably in the service of the statesmanship that became his highest ambition. But, unless Northcliffe ceased to be Northcliffe, *The Times* would have ceased to possess the old impersonal quality, and must have ceased to be *The Times*. For fifteen years, therefore, he was fought by loyal men who, as both sides realized, were utterly powerless to save the fabric of the paper without him but who were determined not to permit him or Pearson to destroy the essential quality of the paper that he alone had saved from financial ruin by reducing it to the level of an agency of personal ambition.

In this personal ambition, as in other things that he touched, his want of grounding in first principles left him a prey to inconsistency. The advertiser must be kept in his place; yet the most important reader of *The Times* was the woman who might choose her clothes from its advertisements. The *Daily Mail* is to be written for the £1,000-a-year man; but its circulation must be pushed up to two million. So with statesmanship. The possession of power disposed him to believe himself worthy of it. His proper place was in the core of the Government—perhaps at the very centre. But did his rivals in Fleet Street think he was going to be fool enough to get caught, chained and muzzled in Whitehall? Did

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Whitehall itself—did Downing Street think so? It is necessary to look behind this internal contradiction to see that the sincerity with which he undertook first the British War Mission to the United States and later the propaganda at Crewe House was no less genuine than his defiance, in the matter of Kitchener and munitions, of the very public opinion that he had done more than any other man to formulate and proclaim. Yet even while Crewe House was enticing the Germans with rosy visions of reconciliation, the *Daily Mail* was profiting by the clamour for revenge, and he saw no harm in being the driving force of both.

His love of power had grown in a very natural, even a boyish, way. As a young man he had tried on Napoleon's hat at Fontainebleau and been satisfied to find that, as he expected, it fitted him. He was a man of fifty-six when on Sunday, May 1, 1921, he presided at a luncheon to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Daily Mail, heard himself publicly proclaimed as one specially favoured by God, was annoyed at seeing a few empty chairs among the hundreds that were filled with his employees, and hurried from the table to the office to superintend in person the report of the ceremony. The war brought much fuel to his belief in himself—in the man of whom the Germans had struck a medal to record their fear and hatred, the man whose modest war-time house in Buckingham Street (now Place), Westminster, was so beset by eminent men in need of him that one afternoon Lady Northcliffe, coming home tired out from her hospital, was warned in her own hall that there was a caller waiting in every room. Not Thomas Barnes himself (one of Northcliffe's heroes) had been so courted when he was "the most powerful man in the country." By this time, the more Northcliffe became convinced of his own importance to the world, the more readily he put trust in anyone who would keep assuring him of it; and his judgment of men as men had seldom been equal to his judgment of men as journalists. All the more need is there to insist upon the genuineness of his desire to save and to serve the British Empire, and through it the world. He came to see his power over the public as conferred upon him for the highest ends by other than human authority. He came back from the United States expecting to be offered high office.

Northcliffe after the Armistice offers an exceptionally alluring subject for the futile game of speculation. What would he have become, what would the Empire and the world have gained or lost, if the statesman in him had been given full scope?

### HIS DISAPPOINTMENT

It is not easy to believe that the popular journalist in him would have died down or even been to any great extent reformed. He talked now with a show of more cynical candour about his motives: the Boy Scouts' Jamboree was devised to "put our paper in the hands of thousands of future buyers of newspapers"; the Ideal Homes Exhibitions were started as a lure for advertisements. He would even sneer at "the better world after the war" as "sentimental nonsense." Printing House Square and Carmelite House soon felt the effects of all that incessantly active engine-power loosed now from nobler loads than circulation, advertisement, and a new surprise every day. It is probable that never before had he indulged so freely in the tricks of the suspicious employer—telephone calls at strange hours of day or night, traps laid by unexpected extension or cancellation of holidays, spells of spiteful rebuke followed by sudden and patently dangerous approval, spying and ferreting. and blows, open or treacherous, struck through the daily "bulletin" to The Times and "communiqué" to the Daily Mail.

In contemplating Northcliffe's relations with individuals on his staffs between the Armistice and his death, it is more than ever necessary to remember the bright side of his effect on the calling of journalist. "It is my proudest boast," he wrote, "that the changes and competition which I have introduced into English journalism have had the effect of increasing the remuneration of almost every class of newspaper writer as well as greatly adding to the number of those engaged in journalism." He had stood up for his reporters against repression and obstruction in Government offices, and for his interviewers against eminent persons who complained that they had been mis-reported. He had insisted on the dignity of the calling; and by that and other means had increased the self-respect of a craft which not even its worst violations of privacy or most scandalous exercises in the art of "making your own news" have yet driven back into its former disrepute. In Northcliffe's personal relations with the men and women in his employ, his ingenuity in prolonged nagging, his violent and unreasonable dislikes, his ruthless dismissals (which only sometimes he pronounced direct) would make no broad blemish on the whole bright expanse of generosity, as carefully thought out as it was lavish, of encouragement and help, of continuous kindness, and, in not a few cases, of personal affection. He could inspire devotion and hold it through endless trials. In Printing House Square all those who worked with him remember him with pride and affection. He was capable of affection strong enough to override his passion for efficiency and success

#### NORTHCLIFFE

To the craft of journalism itself one of his indisputable gifts was a stable and orderly simplicity in arrangement-in the "make-up" of a page and of a paper. To remember his resolve to maintain that simplicity against the later fashion for patchy complexity is to do good service to his memory. It must be long before the profession of journalism forgets the advantages that Northcliffe conferred upon it. To him, The Times owes its transformation from a bankrupt nineteenth-century relic into a flourishing twentieth-century property. paper owes its being as a national daily newspaper and register. the epitome of the world designed for the information of the whole range of executive, professional and political men and women who, by their calling, intelligence and education, rank as the most influential constituency in Great Britain. The Times would have foundered without him. Northcliffe alone had the genius. It was he, his work, his inventions and his changes that alone re-established the property.

# XIX

# THE SALE OF THE WALTERS' PRINTING BUSINESS

The changes that were expected to take place immediately after the transfer of the paper were principally those affecting the constitution. But the legal formalities of the transfer had first to be concluded. The requirements of the approved Bell-Sterling contract were proceeded with immediately. Later in the day upon which judgment was delivered Soames wrote announcing it to the proprietors. As directed, he inquired whether the recipient would prefer to exchange his present holding for First Preference Shares in the new Company or whether he would prefer to take cash. Soames's letter gave the proprietors no help in deciding this question of confidence by any mention of the names and qualifications of those who had bought *The Times*:

16th March 1908

Dear Sir,

The Times: Sibley v. Walter

I am glad to inform you that today Mr. Justice Warrington made an Order sanctioning the Contract between General Sterling and Mr. Moberly Bell expressing himself satisfied that it comprised the best terms that could be got in the interests of the Proprietors. I may add that at the end this Contract was supported by the Plaintiffs themselves and nearly all those who backed them and they admitted at the last that they could get no higher price and that this was the best offer that could be obtained. In fact the Contract was supported by between 80 and 90 per cent of the Proprietors and only a very few opposed.

As the Order will be dated as of today under terms of the Contract you will have one month within which to elect whether you will take cash for your holding or First Preference Shares in the Company to be formed to take over *The Times*.

Perhaps you will kindly let me have your decision in due course.

Yours truly,

JOSEPH SOAMES

The cash opted for amounted to some £180,000 and it was paid out during April. Simultaneously, a beginning was made

in the task of incorporating the Limited Liability Company and again no announcement was made of the purchaser's name. The policy was to avoid shocking public opinion, and more particularly readers and advertisers, and thus helping to "rehabilitate" (Bell's word) the paper. No announcement to the staff was made or contemplated. Even those to whom the name of the purchaser had been communicated continued to refer to him as "X" and the same symbol was used in the correspondence between Bell and Walter.

Certain principal matters required immediate attention. The intention of "X" in acquiring the newspaper carried with it a plan to amalgamate it with the property rights of the Walters in the printing business, the machinery, the fabric of the premises, and finally the freeholds of Printing House Square. The plan, which had not been worked out in detail, had to an undefined extent been accepted by the Walters. At any rate they were prepared to consider giving "X" the opportunity they had originally offered to Pearson, i.e., an arrangement regarding the printing business. Neither party could have been expected to know beforehand that the interests involved were so intricate that a great deal of time would be absorbed, and patience ultimately exhausted, by formalities, claims and counterclaims. It might have been foreseen, however, that unless great care was taken tempers were bound to fray. In fact the correspondence became so protracted and unaccommodating that reconciliation of the aims of both sides was delayed so long that neither Walter nor Bell was to live to see it.

In the early years of The Times Publishing Company, Limited, as the new body was called. the most pressing items in the complete range of interests were the printing business itself, the rent of the premises in which the printing was done, the rent of the premises used for the office, the liability for the taxes and that for the repairs to the fabric. Unfortunately, the discussion of these items was fated to perpetuate the estrangement which had separated Bell from the Walters since January. The necessity to discuss more and more details concerning the properties widened the breach between them until understanding was felt to be out of the question. At first a more hopeful view was possible. Bell's feeling of personal antagonism, much as it had increased since the first mention of Pearson, was not so firmly rooted in March that it could not have been reversed by tact and good will in the coming months of reorganization. A certain amount of disagreeable correspondence might then have

The Companies Acts, 1862 to 1900.

# COMPANY LIMITED BY SHARES.

# Memorandum

AND

# Articles of Association

OF

# The Times Publishing Company,

LIMITED.

Incorporated the 29th day of April, 1908.

SOAMES, EDWARDS & JONES,

Lennox House,

31, Norfolk Street,
Strand, W.C.

# SAFEGUARDING THE EDITORIAL STAFF

ended pleasantly. There was more than a possibility that the new Company's incorporation could be made an opportunity for both sides to clean the slate.

The situation was bound to be difficult. Four generations of Walters had controlled the newspaper and owned the premises in which it was printed. It was hardly to be expected that the transition to a situation in which the family had no control over the newspaper and a lessening independence in dealing with its composition and printing would be easy. Furthermore, while the first two Walters were active business-men in constant and intimate touch with the enterprise they had created, the second two tended with advancing years to become aloof autocrats. When, therefore, in the spring of 1908, Arthur Walter and the other members of the family with positions in P.H.S. found themselves under the necessity of adjusting their positions to the realities of the new situation, they did so unwillingly. Walter was glad to see the incorporation of the limited liability company he had himself long before sought to effect; everything else had been forced upon him. In losing control of the newspaper the Walters had yielded place not, as they sought to do, to a purchaser of their own choice but to one of Bell's. Guarantees, of a sort, had been given as to the future of The Times but it was not yet clear to the Walters, as printers of the journal, what Bell would want to do with that branch of the business.

Certain implications of Bell's success became manifest immediately after the Judge had given his decision. The Walters' attempt to bring in Pearson over Bell's head and their acquiescence in his dismissal was an offence that had scarcely been taken up during the negotiations of February and March. Bell was a man of strong rather than of delicate feelings and the offence had neither been forgotten nor forgiven; but it does not appear that revengeful feelings were uppermost in his mind at the moment of his victory. Rather he was concerned for the future. From March 16, with the judgment he had fought for in his hands, and with Buckle, Chirol and Monypenny confirmed as fellow-directors, and himself wielding immense and direct power over the newspaper, he was more concerned to consolidate his position and rehabilitate the paper. The agreement, according to Bell, was that "X" consented to the continuation of the editorial policy of The Times, and that the editorial chiefs, Buckle, Chirol, Capper, Freeman and others, were to be maintained in their existing positions. As to the paper itself, Buckle supported

changes in administration whilst resisting changes in layout. "We want to impress upon people that what has happened here has resulted in a Conservative revolution," he wrote to Bell on March 24. He did not oppose the idea of radical alterations in the leader and other principal pages of The Times. provided no immediate change was made at present. was obvious common sense in Buckle's recommendation to postpone innovation, but his fear of change was in fact rooted in a reactionary temper which led him to criticize each new proposal. In addition the Editor felt a deep loyalty to the Walter family he had now served since John Walter III had brought him into P.H.S. from Oxford more than a quarter of a century earlier. Finally, the Editor felt a deep distrust of "X" and his methods. The suggestions for editorial changes which at this time came principally through Bell originated less in "X" than in others in the office who were disposed to introduce changes which they had long considered overdue. Chirol, most devoted colleague. perhaps Bell's unlike felt less misgiving regarding "X" and the risks of interference in the editorial department. Specialist as he was in diplomatic history and practice and in foreign affairs, but having no law or economics. Chirol knew nothing of the world of industry and was not in the position to assess the risks as well as the benefits of the change which Bell had engineered. In addition Chirol's health was never good and this spring he was hardly in the condition to survey "X" from any robust ethical or moral standpoint. While Bell was in the thick of the negotiations, he had gone abroad to recover from a breakdown and wrote on March 28, from Taormina, in an encouraging and even enthusiastic strain which laid stress upon the now fair promise of the paper's future and contrasted it favourably with his own (oddly unhistorical) idea of its past "great days":

Many thanks for your very interesting and reassuring letter of Mch. 23. What you tell me about X reminds me of what St Loe Strachey said of him to me: "I hate his methods but there is something very big about him. He seems to me to be cast in much the same metal as Cecil Rhodes whose methods were often equally repugnant, but whom everyone admits to have been a big man."

Certainly on the lines that X has mapped out to you there may yet be a great future for the paper—greater indeed than its past, for I believe its reputation in the "great days" of Delane was very largely due to the absence of all serious competition. "Dans le royaume des aveugles le borgne est roi."

It would be a greater thing to restore the paper to a similar position of pre-eminence in spite of the enormous competition there is today—

# THE EDITOR'S POSITION

and I don't see why it shouldn't be done. But it must depend largely upon yourself, and I therefore rejoiced to hear that you were really taking steps to delegate part of your work to others.

Bell received other assurances of confidence in the future. Among the few on the staff in Bell's confidence was Steed, who had regularly received notes throughout the negotiations. He loyally supported Bell and on April 14 wrote that:

With unity of purpose among the staff and with constant interchange of information and ideas, I believe the Paper will to a great extent "rehabilitate itself" automatically, especially if you who sit up aloft give us a touch of the lash or a word of encouragement.

The unity of the principal staff was thus well maintained only Buckle making a mental reservation as to the worthiness of "X" to control The Times and fear as to his behaviour in the near future. The wider questions of the newspaper's policy necessarily waited and, for the time being, Buckle's conservative views prevailed; the tendency in some members of the staff to "play up" to the new control was restrained. In any event, Bell was pre-occupied with details of finance and, despite his assurance to "X," neither then, nor immediately after, took steps to delegate his work. He too thoroughly enjoyed having the whole of the paper in his hands, and was too sensitive of his fundamental duty to guard the paper against the things that Buckle feared, to abridge his responsibility at this point of what he still looked upon as a struggle. The paper must not be "interfered with." The Times must continue to be The Times. With the composition of the Board of The Times Publishing Company settled, Bell's personal position was clearly defined. "X" freely offered him a contract for his services as Managing Director and suggested a larger salary than he had ever before received. The directors themselves were encouraged to spend a certain amount of money. After years of stringency, Bell enjoyed the opportunity to increase salaries, to send bonuses to those on the staff at home and abroad whose work had been outstandingly meritorious. Thus, after the strain that the whole office had passed through, before and during the sale, there now followed a highly welcome relaxation. The anxiety about money which had haunted Bell from the day he arrived at P.H.S. was now at an end; there was a blessed tranquillity in the office. The limited amount of gossip in the City and West End that connected "X's" name with The Times was not likely to do harm. "X" was sticking to his bargain; he kept in the background. Although Hooper on May 19 urged him to "come right out

# THE SALE OF THE WALTERS' PRINTING BUSINESS

and let yourself be known as having bought *The Times* and then put your own energy into that paper," "X" continued to maintain aloofness and anonymity. Even when, after the incorporation of the Company, Stead published in Newnes's *Review of Reviews* the statement that *The Times* was Northcliffe's property, no authority was conferred upon the statement. The office as a whole, with a notable exception, was at peace.

With the composition of the Company broadly settled it was an appropriate duty for the Managing Director to remove. if possible, friction with Arthur Walter. Bell, however, was not inclined to make any step towards him. He seems, moreover, to have been at pains to see that "X" and Walter did not meet. Hence any feelings "X" may at this time have entertained regarding the Walter family were strongly biased against them. Bell was, for the time being, in a position of power no manager had ever before known. He was able not only to influence the higher policy of the Company but to influence the manner and temper in which it would be carried out. The initiative lay with him as the then all-powerful agent of the purchaser, but he saw no point in bringing "X" into sympathetic personal relations with the man who, as had been agreed in the contract, was to be the Chairman for life of the new Company. Walter's expostulation at this exclusion met with no offer to let bygones be bygones. Thus the care which would have saved the immediate future of The Times from the quarrels of the past was not exercised and the Walters watched events but saw no possibility to influence them. In these circumstances it is not surprising that, having lost the real control of The Times after 123 years and received in exchange the nominal, even ornamental, chairmanship of The Times Publishing Company, Limited, Walter and his brother determined to maintain to the full their claims respecting the printing business and the fabric. The urgent questions of rents, leases, allowances for repairs, deductions for depreciation of printing machinery and the renewal of fixtures which had been debated immediately after the sale (i.e., during the second fortnight of March), were still unsettled in July and August. Any sum asked by Walter was considered excessive. Weeks of discussions followed Bell's objection, first voiced on April 24, to Walter's fixing the net annual rental for the premises at £15,000. It was a figure higher than The Times had paid before 1908, higher than Hooper had put down in the Bell-Hooper scheme declined by Walter in 1907 and higher than Walter had asked from Pearson. In fact it was the figure that Bell had offered and Walter had accepted, but Bell complained that he had only named

## BELL IN OPPOSITION TO WALTER

it in the Bell-Sterling agreement as a figure not to be "exceeded." When he pressed for a revision of the figure, which was his own, and failed to secure either a reduction of it or an option to purchase, he said that Walter's action was "a departure from the spirit of the negotiations." He regretted it all the more, he said, as he wished to preserve amity between the old family and the new régime. "It is perfectly true," he wrote to Walter, "that our friends are so anxious to continue The Times in its present building that they might be persuaded to pay—if you insisted the extreme price named in the negotiations. You may, in fact, possibly be able to take advantage of their genuine desire to preserve the traditions of The Times—and, as the man in possession, to extract from them the last ounce of flesh but, if you do so, I am sure you will create a feeling of rancour which I am anxious to avoid. They will say-not without reason-that you have declined to meet them in any way and have utilized your position to exact the uttermost farthing."

The tone of this letter put an end to personal correspondence between the two men. Walter did not enjoy being placed in the role of Shylock, and in a final letter to Bell said so. As he saw it, he was asked to commit an injustice to his son and successor by now accepting less rent than he had first contemplated simply because he was benefiting from Bell's valuation of the goodwill. The higher figure for goodwill, be pointed out, was arrived at independently from his own lower estimate. In other words Walter saw no reason to give up his portion of the difference between the £320,000 paid for the goodwill of The Times under the Bell-Sterling contract and the £206,000 which was the valuation Walter had himself put upon it or the £260,000 which was Miss Brodie-Hall's figure. For the rest, he said he would hand over the correspondence to his solicitors. Bell answered that Walter would regret it. As to the price paid for the goodwill, it has been seen that the larger sum was fixed in order to remove the danger of a competitor's bid of a "better price"; in other words, the offer of £320,000 cash was necessary in order to make sure of Harmsworth's getting it. Walter had complained to Bell at the time, i.e., in February, that to offer the proprietors so high a sum necessarily meant offering terms more advantageous to them than those that would be probably offered himself as owner of the printing business. In April Walter came to feel that Bell was trying to improve his position with "X" (now his employer) by attacking the family's rights and revenues.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In fact there had been no "negotiations"; "X's" offer, as conveyed by Bell to Arthur Walter, was an offer to be taken or left.

# THE SALE OF THE WALTERS' PRINTING BUSINESS

Thus after the "Shylock" letter, and Bell's answer, the atmosphere of the negotiations further deteriorated.

"X" himself could hardly intervene. He did not possess the advantage of Bell's experience of the office, had no independent knowledge of his own, and learnt of the progress of affairs only through him. He saw himself as a journalist with a business sense and, in the case of The Times, unconscious of any desire to make money out of it but yet connected in a business way with a very unbusinesslike, but acquisitive, family. He had, for public reasons, agreed that the head of that family should for the rest of his life, and his son after him, be Chairman of The Times Publishing Company, Limited. The chief risk, eight or ten times that of Walter's, was being borne by the purchaser and yet, he was informed by Bell, Walter was showing little intention of cooperating. "X" was told, for instance, that Walter, who, as director, took an annual fee of £100, was dissatisfied with his fee of £500 as Chairman, and insisted upon £1,000. Bell found greater irritation in the matter of the fee than did "X," who for the time being was satisfied merely to have bought The Times. "X" had no feelings of revenge against the Walters; he had no desire to interfere with them or their printing business—provided it gave the newspaper what it required, a printing service comparable with that to which newspapermen were accustomed. It was with the newspaper that "X" was primarily concerned, and he had been schooled by Bell to think that the Walters had regarded The Times as, in a sense, a secondary concern; the business of printing it was a greater source of profit and hence a more immediate interest. To "X," therefore, Arthur and Godfrey Walter were what they had always been—the printers of the paper.

From "X's" point of view, therefore, the future position of the Walters depended in great measure upon their technical efficiency as printers. Bell, for all the time he had spent with *The Times*, had hardly appreciated that the position of the printer was radically different from that of the Editor and his staff or the Manager and his staff. He had from the first looked at *The Times* and admired it with the eyes of a reader. He had written for *The Times* as a foreign correspondent as early as 1867, naturally at that time regarding the paper with the eyes of a writer. As Assistant Manager from 1890 he still looked at it with the eyes of a reader and a writer, even to a great extent as an editor; but he never got into the habit of seeing it with the eyes of a manufacturer or a printer. His managership, be it said, was remarkable as much for its editorial quality as for any other. Even in 1907 he was carrying on a vigorous anonymous

## THE PRINTING CHARGES

controversy on Egyptian affairs in the correspondence columns of The Times with Wilfrid Scawen Blunt. He deliberately and strictly limited his interest in The Times as the national register. For him it remained above all an imperial and foreign record, a political and social instrument, a medium of discussion, a moderator of opinion, and to some extent an intelligencer of domestic news. As such it had to be made to pay; without, if possible, but with, if necessary, the support of subsidies from good books or other good "schemes." But of the department that should have been most important to the manager of a newspaper in his period, i.e., advertising, Bell understood nothing; he had been more than glad to hand it over to Hooper and Jackson. Bell knew even less of printing and was equally happy to leave it to the Walters. In any event, the Walters, who were his direct employers, would have discouraged any interest in printing that Bell had cared to show.

Bell's limitation, as regards printing, was more reasonably in place than it may sound to a modern newspaper manager. At least, his disregard of printing would have been perfectly sound if Godfrey Walter, who was responsible for the printing business, had ever been seriously interested in the craft. The whole Sibley case might have been avoided and the family maintained in its historic position as the Managers of The Times if Godfrey Walter had chosen from 1894 to take in the printing business half the practical and enterprising interest shown by John Walter I, II and III. With proper application to the task and the use of modern methods the proprietors' complaint that the Walters' private printing business was overcharging *The Times* need never have arisen. If from 1908, in association with the new control, and ignoring Bell, he had thrown himself into the task of organizing the printing business in accordance with the new requirements he could still have saved the family's position. But Godfrey Walter did none of these things. Walter himself was too unwell to attempt anything of the kind. The interruption of the traditional mechanical enterprise of the office had developed into total cessation. The office, which, in its earlier period, had done more for the advancement of the art of printing than any other press in the world since Gutenberg, Blaeu, and Stanhope gave, under Godfrey Walter, no confirmation of the oldest of all its claims.

The programme of typographical invention which John Walter began in 1784, and to advertise which *The Times* itself was first undertaken, had been surpassed by that of his son. The Koenig steam-press of 1812, the press of Applegath in 1828 were the

# THE SALE OF THE WALTERS' PRINTING BUSINESS

wonders of his age. The stereotyping in 1860; the rotary press of 1868; and the Kastenbein Composer in 1870 were the most important of the inventions first brought to practical use in P.H.S. under John Walter III. One immediate justification for mechanical expansion lessened with a decreasing circulation. There was little further need, it is true, to spend large sums in experimenting upon new methods of producing a newspaper of which fewer and fewer copies were required. The cost of production of single copies increased as the circulation fell, for it costs exactly the same to compose a newspaper whether few or many copies are printed off. The rent, too, one of Walter's main sources of income, had to be paid by The Times whether the circulation was buoyant or not. Unhappily, it was never considered by Arthur or Godfrey Walter that they, like Walter I and II, could contract for publishing firms outside and thus maintain their engineering efficiency besides lessening the weight of the heavy overheads with which the paper, with the negligible help of the Weekly and the Law Reports, had to bear alone. Hence, as the sales decreased throughout the period of the fourth Walter's proprietorship, the overheads and other costs increased. The reply of the Walters in 1908 to the criticism that the plant was out of date was that it suited The Times. It was of course true; it was equally true that The Times suited the Walters' composing- and machine-rooms. On the other hand, quite apart from Bell's wish to use the alleged insufficiency of the printing plant as a means of pressing the Walters to reduce the rent or to compel them to pay the taxes, it was hardly to be expected that the new ownership, having put £320,000 into The Times, would rest content with a paper physically arranged to suit the convenience and limitation of the hereditary printers.

It was known to Bell and to Hooper in 1907, when Messrs. Deloitte Plender and Company had investigated the books; it was known to Pearson and it was known to "X" that the revenue to the Walters of the rents plus the amount of profit on the work of composing and printing The Times exceeded the sum of £40,000 a year. This sum had actually been treated as one of the assets of the amalgamation to be created by the Walter-Pearson contract of January 6. The Bell-Sterling contract maintained the Walters in the same situation. The Times Publishing Company, Limited, thus had to face standing charges aggregating this £40,000 a year. Bell, resolved to get the rent reduced and the taxes allowed for, again pressed upon Walter the argument that "X" had given him an unexpected bonus when the proprietors were paid £320,000 for the goodwill. Walter met the argument

# THE VALUE OF THE PLANT

by an offer to give up his portion of the difference as part of a general scheme. The suggestion angered Bell. He saw at once that to get the agreement of the rest of the proprietors who had similarly benefited, even of those who like the Walters had taken their portion in shares in The Times Publishing Company, Limited, would be impossible and that almost certainly the scheme would have to go before the Court which only a month earlier had accepted his valuation of £320,000. It was out of the question. The rent, being left with other matters to rank—and to rankle—Bell busied himself with the task of contesting the valuation put upon the printing plant and the furniture in P.H.S. As given by Messrs. Edwin Fox and Bousfield it was £80,000 and £10,000 respectively. Having examined it, Bell roundly told the Walters that the printing machinery was useless, that the assets included no fund for depreciation and replacement, that the new Company would have to spend £60,000 in order to bring the plant up to date and that their valuation could not be allowed to stand. He said this in April. He knew in the previous December, 1907, that the valuation had been made in these terms. He then said nothing.

The excitement and fatigue of the secret conversations and negotiations with "X" which Bell had undertaken in January, February and March for the purpose of defeating the Walter plan to bring in Pearson—not to mention the day-to-day management of The Times which inevitably fell to him-had pressed into the background of his mind much that would nowadays be regarded as matters of normal commercial routine. Thus, it had not been possible to conduct and check detailed investigations into the whole of the assets and liabilities which the operation of selling The Times really required. Bell had, in his ignorance, believed in these months that the printing department was efficient. Kennedy Jones and other experts who were now going round the office at the instruction of "X," exploded that idea. It was they who recommended to Bell that he offer £20,000 in the place of Fox and Bousfield's £80,000. To tell the Walters this was an agreeable task for the Managing Director.

The word used by Bell to describe the Walter's composingand machine-rooms was "scrap." It was not a strictly accurate description, for the machinery was in excellent condition, even if it was now considered out of date for a modern metropolitan daily newspaper. It was not "scrap" but it was old-fashioned like so much more in P.H.S. The Kastenbein composing machine, one of the many typographical inventions which had been developed in P.H.S., had been much improved elsewhere since

# THE SALE OF THE WALTERS' PRINTING BUSINESS

its first use for composing The Times in 1872. The Linotype was introduced from America and successfully used by the Globe in 1896; the Monotype was used by the Glasgow Record in 1900. These were both more expensive but more rapidly operated than the Kastenbein machine, and the whole of the daily London and provincial Press was being composed by such modern The Kastenbein, as a machine, less costly in itself machines. and less expensive to operate, had kept its place in P.H.S. and, in view of Godfrey Walter's notion of speed, its relative slowness of output was no obstacle to its continued use. Hence, to the Walters. Bell's references to "scrap" appeared as purely gratuitous observations made in the interest of the new ownership and control. That control retained the same management and now, Walter saw, Bell had the task of finding a dividend upon a larger capital than would have been required by the "Pearson" scheme. He could only do it at the expense of the printers. Some objection, however, was not altogether unexpected; valuations are commonly disputed. The usual thing then as now was for the protesting party to secure a valuation of his own and for both sides to meet. Bell proposed this. It was a reasonable and, on the face of it, a pacific suggestion. But before it could be accepted he made another move of a by no means pacific kind.

It has been seen that one of the items in the claim which Dr. Sibley had made against the Walters was in respect of "excessive printing profits charged to the old proprietors." That claim, referred to as "No. 7" from its position in the Bell-Sterling contract, and originally made for £60,000, was increased in a later summons to £100,000. When ultimately yielded in the general settlement approved by the Court, the claim was acquired as an "asset" from the proprietors. This was done, Bell swore, solely as a means of preventing litigation by discontented proprietors, principally Dr. Sibley, against the Walters after The Times newspaper had become the property of "X." The final overriding by the Judge on March 16, of Dr. Sibley's objection to the inclusion of Item No. 7 in the sale to Bell and Sterling, resulted in the eventual substitution of the name of The Times Publishing Company, Limited, for that of Dr. Sibley as the owner of the potential asset represented by any successful action against Walter that he might have undertaken for the restitution of excessive profits. The avoidance of such an action had been one of the prime motives that had induced Walter to support the Bell-Sterling contract as long as it included that item. On February 25 when Bell entered his appeal against the Judge's

<sup>1</sup> For the definition of Item No. 7 see p. 558 supra; for Bell's affidavit see p. 568.

# ITEM "NO. 7" REVIVED

exclusion of the item, he was confident that the end of that claim was near, indeed, of any such claim, and on that day he agreed to support the contract. When he learnt of the Judge's decision made on March 16, he hastened to congratulate Bell; later, when he was informed of the circumstances in which Item No. 7 had finally been successfully included in the schedule, he wrote thus: Bear Wood Mar. 17, 1908

My Dear Bell: I hear that a great struggle was made on behalf of certain parties to have clause 7 excluded. This only increases my obligation to you, as well as to your Principal whose consent you must obviously have obtained before deciding to maintain your ground at all costs. I trust you will both of you believe me when I say this, and of course I could not mean it more sincerely if I repeated it in different words a dozen times over.

I look forward with great pleasure and interest to taking up my work again under the new constitution & you of course will rely upon my doing my best with a whole heart. At present I doubt if I could be of any great use; for the strain on me has been very severe for some time past & I am not gifted with the adamantine powers of some of my friends—that is to say yourself.

Yours very truly,
A. F. WALTER

There could be no future question whatsoever respecting Item No. 7 after March 15. That was what Walter understood. Four months later, on June 11, Bell transferred his rights under the Bell-Sterling agreement to The Times Publishing Company, Limited, which was the date of its first Board meeting. On that auspicious day Walter was in the Chair, and the Board also authorized the Managing Director to ask Walter to name the terms upon which he would vest the ownership of the printing business in the Company.

Bell's communication in this sense encountered the usual Walter delay. Bell, however, had a very pressing reason for urging him to name his conditions; upon them depended the course of his future policy. Correspondence about the conditions and terms under which the printing business could be amalgamated with the paper had dragged along during all the weeks in which Bell had been urging Walter to reduce the rent and give an allowance for the taxes. More time passed after Walter had closed the matter by saying that he would do neither and that he could only consent to repay his portion of the £320,000 goodwill over and above that of £260,000 as part of a general scheme. Bell was silent after this point had been reached and he remained silent for some time. In July Walter thought the matter was, for the time being, shelved. But on the 24th Bell broke his silence.

# THE SALE OF THE WALTERS' PRINTING BUSINESS

Walter on that day was due to attend the Court for the purpose of receiving his purely formal discharge as Receiver, now that the Company was incorporated. To his utter surprise Bell's counsel requested that the certificate of discharge include the statement that it was given without prejudice to the rights of the purchaser to have an account rendered to him, as purchaser of all the assets, of the figures connected with the printing business, and that the purchaser should have liberty to apply if any question should arise on such accounts. It was evident that Bell desired to take power to revive, in the interest of the purchaser, Dr. Sibley's claim, *i.e.*, Item No. 7, for the restitution of the "excessive" printing profits charged to the old proprietors. To Walter's chagrin the Court upheld Bell.

This judgment completely falsified Walter's previous estimate of his position. He now thought it wise to name at once the terms and conditions regarding the transfer of the printing business. His solicitors were instructed to proceed with expedition. They did so, and, at the Board meeting on August 24, 1908, Chirol in the Chair, deputising for Walter, announced that there were allotted 100,000 Second Preference Shares to Arthur Walter and 50,000 to Godfrey Walter "for the purchase of the printing business." At last, therefore, the business engaged solely in printing The Times, but separate in ownership from it and making separate and uncontrolled profits was now peacefully absorbed by the single limited liability company. The case of the proprietors of The Times against the printers which had been led by Mrs. Murray in her first action against Walter II in 1838, and continued by Dr. Sibley against Walter IV in his first action of 1902, had been brought to a successful issue by Moberly Bell, third Manager in succession to William Delane, who first warned the family that without "a new arrangement the property would be exposed to great risk and the paper to destruction." The constitutional reorganization of P.H.S. was still far from completion but a great step towards the solution of outstanding difficulties with the Walters had been taken. Apart from aggravation of the personal differences between Bell and Arthur Walter, there was now a real possibility of peace between "X" and the family.

As there was no more talk about Item No. 7, Walter hoped that, with the passage of time, peace might be made even between himself and Bell. Unknown to Walter, Bell was shouldering during the summer and autumn of 1908 a burden no less heavy than that of the previous year, and in Chirol's absence, he was responsible for important foreign correspondence, which delayed his schemes for reform in the office.

# XX

# DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN DISCORDS

THE TIMES of January 1, 1908, after welcoming the New Year in conventional fashion had proceeded to the consideration of certain problems of an unfamiliar order. They arose, in the words of the leading article, out of the "sudden" rise of Japan to world power. The British alliance, it was contended, was well based upon mutual interests but for its maintenance there was required first, "delicate handling," and, secondly, in a phrase that became frequent in coming years, "mutual selfrestraint" in considerable degree. There followed the statement that "the Americans have always been a people particularly free in the expression of their opinions." It was a particularly reckless American utterance made during the week that made the occasion of the leading article. It was "deplorable" since it went so far as to threaten Japan with immediate war. The American grievance was the Oriental immigration into California. The justification for referring to such a domestic American concern was that Japanese immigration also, if not equally, affected Canada and hence the question was too serious for Britain to bear the prejudice of "deplorable" American threats. It was too serious because The Times had reason to be sceptical regarding the disclaimer given in Tokyo to a recent statement of Count Okuma's which had led a St. Petersburg newspaper to say that Russian and British soldiers might be found standing shoulder-to-shoulder in the defence of India against Japanese aggression. It was the kind of comment that could not fail to worry Chirol. The mention of India aroused all the suspicions of one who was already nervous of the continuing Russian pressure upon Persia. The Times, though also concerned by the new accounts of repression in Russia, sought consolation in a paragraph from the Novoye Vremya. Mackenzie Wallace was reported as having said, after his audience with the Czar, that signs of pacification were everywhere visible and that "great reforms cannot be stopped by any events whatsoever."

Later in the month when Parliament reassembled, The Times felt able to congratulate ministers upon the tranquillity of foreign

affairs and gave the principal credit to Sir Edward Grey and Lord Lansdowne. No comment was offered upon Mr. Balfour's statement, made in the course of the debate upon the Russian agreement, regretting that the Persian Gulf was excluded from specific mention in the formal treaty, but left to be regulated by diplomatic assurances.

The international scene was rudely perturbed by the shocking events of Saturday, February 1, when the King of Portugal and the heir to the throne were murdered by a band of assassins in the pay of a fanatical Republican group. Prince Manuel escaped with an injury and was proclaimed King under the title of Manuel II. The Requiem Mass for the dead members of the family held in London at the Church of St. James, Spanish Place, was the first occasion upon which an English King had attended the worship of the Catholic Church since the Reformation. While the function was not a State occasion the King and Queen drove to the church guarded by an escort of the Life Guards under the command of 2nd Lieutenant J. J. Astor. The outrage led The Times to delay comment on a speech made by Tirpitz in the Reichstag debate on the new Navy Bill. The padre later expressed mild curiosity regarding the Admiral's statement that he could not understand why such a Bill should cause "uneasiness" in Britain. The Times assured the Admiral that "uneasiness" was not at all the word to describe the feeling in Britain.

We are a united nation in our determination to maintain our command of the sea against any combination of possible enemies. We are as entirely agreed to meet any steps taken by others, which may threaten now or hereafter to alter the balance of naval power to our prejudice, by corresponding steps upon our side. The public unquestionably look upon the German Bill as such a step. . . . We have not the slightest wish to lavish upon the Navy additional millions out of the taxpayers' pockets. But we shall lavish them, willingly and freely, in order to secure our naval position relatively to that of other nations, to whatever extent the technical advisers of the Government may deem it to be necessary. No assurances however positive, and no blandishments however profuse, will induce us to depart from that settled principle of our national policy. We desire this to be known beyond the possibility of mistake, because mistakes upon this point would certainly cause much needless expense to others and to ourselves, and they might cause serious misunderstandings as well. Our Navy is to us what the army is to Germany. We are no more likely to allow its relative superiority to be impaired than is Germany to allow her military position to be weakened as compared with that of her neighbours. (February 3, 1908.)

### THE NAVAL QUESTION

It was the most unequivocal statement of policy that *The Times* had published. The naval needs of the country were not to be ignored under any pretext. A month later when Irish Home Rule was once more before the House of Commons, *The Times*, arguing a well-worn theme, demanded the maintenance of the Union. It did so on various grounds, principal among them being that "the greatest of American naval writers has warned us that from a naval point of view we could not safely trust a Parliament, even of avowed friends, to govern Ireland independently of this country." The consistency with which *The Times* under Buckle supported the Conservative policy had made the paper appear almost a party paper, but at no time, since Daniel O'Connell, did *The Times* neglect the force of the argument now used by Mahan, regarding the Irish harbours.

Agitation at home had played its part in forcing the Liberals to concede increases in the British Navy corresponding to those announced by Germany and Metternich sent a précis of The Times leader to Bülow saying that it hardly corresponded with the facts to claim, as Tirpitz did, that the new Bill left the English at ease. The Kaiser recognized this. On February 16, 1908, he wrote a private letter to Lord Tweedmouth, First Lord of the Admiralty, protesting against the anti-German tone of the British Press, and denying emphatically that the increase in the German Navy was directed against Britain. It was a serious political letter and, in Tweedmouth's words to Grey, "an astounding communication." His idea was to send a formal note acknowledging receipt and asking time to consider before replying. In due time he referred the Kaiser to a memorandum, dated February 28, that had been prepared in the Foreign Office for the Ambassador, Sir Frank Lascelles, to hand to Prince Bülow for the Imperial consideration. The Kaiser's letter had been written without the knowledge of Bülow and might never have become known had Tweedmouth kept it secret. Towards the end of February, the Military Correspondent of The Times learnt the essentials of the Kaiser's letter, and after conferring with Buckle, Repington addressed to the Editor the following letter, dated March 4, which was headed "Under Which King?" and published in The Times of March 6.

Sir,—I consider it my duty to ask you to draw the attention of the public to a matter of grave importance.

It has come to my knowledge that His Majesty the German Emperor has recently addressed a letter to Lord Tweedmouth on the subject of British and German naval policy, and it is affirmed that this

letter amounts to an attempt to influence, in German interests, the Minister responsible for our Navy Estimates.

The letter is undoubtedly authentic, and a reply to it has been despatched.

In these circumstances, and as the matter has become an open secret owing to the number of persons to whom it has, most unwisely and unfortunately, been made known, I venture to urge that the letter in question, together with the reply, should be laid before Parliament without delay.

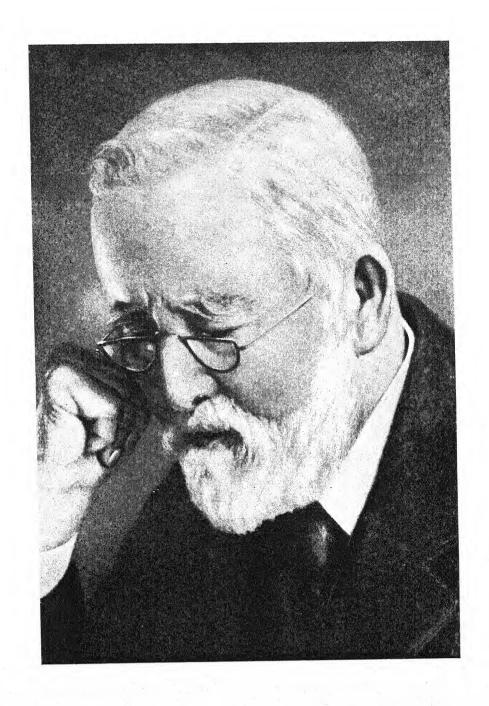
I am, &c.,

YOUR MILITARY CORRESPONDENT.

The leading article which voiced the paper's protest was written after careful consideration. Thursfield, the Naval Correspondent, was inclined to make light of the affair by making one more draft upon the understanding, widespread in this country, of the Kaiser's impulsiveness. Buckle, on the other hand, regarded the issue as serious. He knew from Saunders and Steed that William had before used his Imperial rank to take advantage of individuals in responsible positions. It was a bad case, and made infinitely worse by the fact that Lord Tweedmouth actually acknowledged the Kaiser's letter. Buckle was determined to speak out.

In a letter to the Editor, Lord Courtney1 argued that the statements of the Military Correspondent lacked confirmation and that there was insufficient reason to hurry to the conclusion that the letter meant that the Germans wanted to overtake us. It was now desirable that the Kaiser's letter should be published; but, Lord Courtney said, a confidential letter can only be published with the consent of the writer. "Should he not see his way to communicate his letter to the world, no one would be entitled to take umbrage at his refusal, or to put an evil construction upon his reticence." The letter may well have been written in the interests of international peace. Thursfield acquiesced. Such excuses did not please the Editor. "I do not propose to ask you," he said to Thursfield, "to write about the Kaiser-Tweedmouth correspondence. I do not understand how eminent constitutionalists like Courtney and you can make light of such a highly unconstitutional and improper proceeding as a correspondence between a foreign Sovereign and the British Minister responsible for the Navy and naval policy." In this frame of mind Buckle instructed Ross to prepare the short leading article

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Leonard H. Courtney, leader-writer from 1864-1875 and a "Library in Breeches," according to Delane, had been made a peer in 1906 with the title of Lord Courtney of Penrith.



JAMES RICHARD THURSFIELD

#### THE TWEEDMOUTH LETTER

which was published on March 6. It maintained the principle that there is no room for private communications between the head of a foreign State and the head of the British Admiralty. The Times was in a position to confirm the Military Correspondent's statement, and added to his observations the amplification that only care for German interests would have led the Kaiser to take the trouble to write such a letter to such a person as the First Lord of the Admiralty. That the Kaiser held the honorary rank of Admiral of the Fleet in the British Navy was proof that the abolition of dynastic compliments was overdue. As to the letter, the country was entitled to demand publication of its text and that of the reply. There was no privacy in a matter of this kind. Lord Tweedmouth was a public servant and had been addressed because he was such. "If there was any doubt before about the meaning of German naval expansion, none can remain after an attempt of this kind to influence the Minister responsible for our Navy in a direction favourable to German interests; an attempt, in other words, to make it more easy for German preparations to overtake our own." (March 6, 1908.)

The publication of the letter by The Times with the consequences it entailed to Lord Tweedmouth and to Bülow brought fresh condemnation upon Printing House Square. The publication, wrote Professor Schiemann, "is only to be explained by the inveterate hatred of The Times."2 The same note was sounded all over Germany and found expression in the Austrian Press. Buckle, who was in any case a typical

1 The text of the Kaiser's letter had been seen by Buckle. It was, as the leading article said, "in substance a long and elaborate argument, the result of considerable labour and time, intended to persuade Lord Tweedmouth that German preparations labour and time, intended to persuade Lord Tweedmouth that German preparations contain no menace, present or future, to this country and that, in consequence, they ought not to induce this country to make any corresponding addition to the Fleet." The revelation of the Tweedmouth letter in *The Times* of March 6, 1908, was considered by Lord Esher to have ruined Repington's chances of keeping in touch with Government officials. "From his own standpoint he will find that his game was not worth the candle." Tweedmouth told Fisher that he had just put down the indiscretion to Esher. (Cf. Esher, Journals II, 293.) An idea of the effect of publication is given by Metternich to Bülow on March 8, 1908: "Sir Ernest Cassel... told me... that the King was utterly indignant about the publication of The Times and its reckless and stupid accusations. Sir Ernest does not believe that the excitement of the public will last long or that the correspondence affair will have a disadvantageous of the public will last long or that the correspondence affair will have a disadvantageous influence on Anglo-German relations; the attack of *The Times* (he said) was too coarse and clumsy as to be able to achieve a lasting effect. Sir Schomberg Macdonald, Lord Salisbury's former private political secretary... described to me yesterday... the general feeling (among the members of the Carlton Club) as follows: that it would have been better if the letter had not been written, that it was a pity that public attention had been drawn to it, that Lord Tweedmouth could not keep his tongue, and that The Times was a blackguard. As far as I could ascertain, that is also the general feeling in other circles. Sir Schomberg Macdonald does not, however, believe that the incident will be forgotten so soon, and I share his opinion. The suspicion that a foreign ruler, particularly one as clever as H.M. the Emperor, might gain influence over a British Minister, has been raised afresh by the correspondence, although the coarse insinuations of The Times are not being given credit to." (G.P. XXIV, p. 44.)

supporter of the "blue-water school," remained most shocked at the Kaiser's direct approach to a British Minister.

Nor was *The Times* satisfied when on the same day Asquith made a statement in answer to a question in the House. He said that the Kaiser's letter was a purely friendly, personal and private one, and Lord Tweedmouth's equally so, and neither had been communicated to the Cabinet, which had, in fact, already reached its decision regarding the Navy Estimates. Lord Tweedmouth's own statement came two days later in the House of Lords when it gave greater satisfaction in Germany than in P.H.S. The following day's paper argued against the Government's policy, expressed in the debate, of minimizing the action of the head of a State whose fleet, based within a few hours of our shores, was constructed to form a striking force at short range.

As to the general position of Anglo-German relations. The Times realized that there was no one in this country, "whatever spiteful partisanship may say, who has either interest or desire to make them anything but good." But good relations reposed upon a basis firmer than good words. As to the facts, The Times pointed to the conduct of Germany at The Hague Conference and the naval increases within easy striking distance of our coasts. Finally, regarding indirect diplomacy, the paper said that "if it is tried again upon any member of a British Government, it will be met in a more spirited manner and with a more just sense of constitutional propriety than on the present occasion." (March 10, 1908.) On the 12th, the paper printed a letter from the Military Correspondent, observing that one of his motives for writing his original letter had been a revision of the Navy Estimates owing to the pressure of the "left wing of the party in power." His calculated indiscretion, he said, had led Mr. Asquith to take the emergency course. The matter thereupon dropped and The Times concentrated its interest upon the Estimates. There was nothing, so far as the paper's information went, that promised tranquillity in Europe; far from it.

On succeeding Goluchowski in October, 1906, Aehrenthal's immediate intention was to revive a closer understanding with Russia and to revise the Mürzsteg Agreement of 1903 regarding Macedonian reforms. He wished to substitute an Austro-Russian for the existing broad international basis of Mürzsteg. It became known, however, that Isvolsky had other ideas. The Anglo-Russian Accord was announced, and when Isvolsky arrived in Vienna in September, 1907, he was coldly received. Neverthe-

#### A CENTRAL EUROPEAN INCIDENT

less, agreement upon Macedonia was found possible, but Aehrenthal desired to place the agreed draft of the reforms before the Council of Ambassadors at Constantinople. Isvolsky asked Steed why Aehrenthal was ill-humoured. The Correspondent made the obvious reply that it was not Austrian or German policy to encourage Russian interest in Europe or the Near East. He warned Isvolsky that he might find Aehrenthal a slippery customer. Soon, Isvolsky was able to confirm Steed's view of the Minister's character. When, within a few weeks. he was under the necessity of reporting to the Czar, his Imperial Majesty produced a dispatch from the Ambassador at Constantinople describing how Aehrenthal had promised to drop entirely the plan for Macedonian reform, provided Turkey granted Austria-Hungary the concession for a railway from the Bosnian border into Macedonia, through the Sanjak of Novi-Bazar. In due time when the Ambassadors met to consider the Aehrenthal-Isvolsky draft for Macedonian reform, both the Austro-Hungarian and the German representatives opposed it. Later it was known that Aehrenthal had applied for the Novi-Bazar concession, and Turkey had granted it. Isvolsky begged that the application should be kept secret. With great deliberation Aehrenthal published the news, adding, with supreme disregard equally of British susceptibilities, the engineering problems and the military potentialities, that the railway would "constitute a new and important route from Central Europe to Egypt and India." A first-class international incident was thereby created. It involved the Habsburg Monarchy with Russia and with Britain, which may not have been intended; made for discord between Britain and Russia, which was one of the prime motives; and the fate of Isvolsky, which was certainly part of the design; but, what was not in the least foreseen, Aehrenthal's as well. Time would prove which of the two Ministers would survive.

The railway project was defended in terms that could not fail to arouse the suspicions of Britain. Aehrenthal affirmed that Austria-Hungary's position was such that she must take part in the tremendous development of trade between the Occident and the Orient. The statement was disturbing also to Isvolsky. Yet, auspicious and smooth words came from Aehrenthal on the general subject of international relations. The aspect, if not the reality, of change was noted in Britain when, in April, 1908, Campbell-Bannerman died and was succeeded by Asquith, and Mr. Reginald McKenna took Lord Tweedmouth's place at the Admiralty. Asquith had the reputation of being an

Imperialist, but it was believed in P.H.S. that the new Government's policy was to seek by every means an arrangement with Germany regarding naval construction. Steed's summing-un was that the Germans had joined with the Austrians to test the " Practically, Anglo-Russian understanding. Bülow Aehrenthal say to Isvolsky: Come to terms with us on our basis in regard to the East; or stick to England and take the consequences." Opinion in Russia ranged itself against Aehrenthal for having duped Isvolsky and not against Isvolsky for having been duped. Independently of Austria-Hungary. the entente Powers, France, Russia and England, proceeded with the discussion of a Macedonian scheme of their own Russia planned a new railway from the Danube to the Adriatic. Thus the European situation, as Steed said, was undergoing a profound change. To all intents and purposes, the Concert of Europe had been destroyed. The difficulties over a Macedonian settlement and the success of German and Austro-Hungarian propaganda combined to fan the "Young Turk" movement and to encourage attempts to re-create the "Concert." Early in June, 1908, King Edward and the Czar met at Reval and considered the Macedonian question. On June 19 Isvolsky made a communication to Aehrenthal, but on the 24th the Young Turks rose in rebellion. The consequent excitement was overshadowed in Austria by preparations for the celebration of the Emperor's diamond jubilee, but the value of a political exploitation of the anniversary and of the rebellion was by no means overlooked by Aehrenthal. He had a sensational plan. Times secured early information of what was intended.

Early in August "an influential official" visited Steed on behalf of one of the principal members of the Austrian Cabinet to ascertain his reaction to an idea, which he admitted to be seriously entertained by a limited circle, of marking the jubilee by the annexation, in the Emperor's name, of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Steed's answer was that a grave European crisis would follow an abrupt and one-sided cancellation of one of the articles of the treaty governing the status of Bosnia. It was true that the Young Turks had brought off a successful revolution, but the Western nations would not look kindly upon an Austrian attempt to take advantage of it to secure sovereign authority over a population of Southern Slavs. The most appropriate "act of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> He was Dr. Friedrich Gaertner, a Christian Socialist, who enjoyed the confidence of Dr. Gessmann, a leading member of the Austrian Government in which he represented Dr. Lueger, the Burgomaster of Vienna and head of the Christian Social Party. This Party was the strongest in the Austrian Parliament. Its relations with the ecclesiastical hierarchy were intimate; and its leaders were always in close touch with the Heir Apparent, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand.

sovereignty" towards Bosnia-Herzegovina would be to grant autonomy, which only a sovereign could do. That if this were done the inhabitants of Bosnia-Herzegovina would elect members of a Turkish Parliament Steed simply did not believe; but if they did, annexation might be resorted to and only then. The official retired after saying that the matter would be decided by a special council of Ministers to be held on the Emperor's birthday. August 18. In the meantime, the Campbell-Bannerman administration, in order to symbolize its pacific intentions, had reduced naval expenditure in its first year and only slightly increased it in its second year. The Asquith Government added only two millions to the Estimates after a sharp struggle with McKenna, who wanted much more. At the same time the Government pledged itself to find more money in 1909 should the German acceleration continue. The German Naval Bill of April, 1908, increased the annual programme to four capital ships.

That was the situation when six months after the incident of the Tweedmouth letter, the King, being at Marienbad, went to Cronberg and saw the Kaiser. They talked generally about affairs, with the exception of the Navy. But the Kaiser also had an interview with Sir Charles Hardinge, who, as Steed reported privately on August 14, "took the bull by the horns" and did mention ships. Upon this the Kaiser "showed his teeth" and said flatly "we would rather go to war than accept such dictation." Henceforth it was plain even to the most unwilling that no gesture of any kind would influence either the German building programme or the speed at which it was to be carried out. Asquith, who had considered it imperative to propose a large increase for 1909, was hampered by Lloyd George and Winston Churchill who desired to limit building to the four dreadnoughts recommended by Asquith to be laid down immediately, and to lay down two more at the beginning of 1910 if the situation required it. At the Cabinet a crisis was provoked in which McKenna nearly resigned. The Unionist opposition attacked the Government programme as insufficient, and demanded eight ships to be laid down in the current year. Asquith's answer was: four immediately and four next year if they were advised that it was urgent and necessary. The effect of the controversy upon Continental observers was the reverse of reassuring except upon believers in the theory of British decadence. As Repington was to put it in an article on Lord Roberts and his Critics, "we adversely affect the nerves of Europe, because we refuse to look many unpleasant facts in the face, and fail to take those measures which we know to be

<sup>1</sup> Steed to Bell. August 14, 1908.

necessary to secure the tolerable safety of the Imperial fabric." Britain's attitude was reserved. Tempers were badly frayed. For his part, Steed felt that the European situation was undergoing, if it had not undergone, a profound change. "It reminds me of the Campanile di S. Marco at Venice. The guardian of the tower wanted a few inches more elbow-room in his little kitchen and took away a sort of lintel in order to enlarge the passage. Next day there was a crack in the wall above, and the week after the whole campanile sat down upon itself. Nothing was changed; the same bricks and mortar were there; only the situation was different."

In the meantime King Edward was on the way from Cronberg, where he had seen the Kaiser, to Ischl. On August 13 he personally offered his felicitations to Francis Joseph. Sir Charles Hardinge, who accompanied the King, saw Steed on the 14th. The atmosphere was decidedly different from that of the King's visit in the previous summer. The buoyancy of 1907 had yielded to a feeling of pessimism. Steed reported to Bell on the 14th that Sir Edward Goschen told him, that afternoon, of his appointment to Berlin as successor to Sir Frank Lascelles and that Sir Fairfax Cartwright, the Minister at Munich, was to succeed Goschen at Vienna. That the King's visit to the Kaiser at Cronberg had been by no means a political success was confirmed to him on the day of writing. As Steed informed Bell

Goschen tells me he regards his appointment to Berlin with dismay, as things appear to be going straight towards a conflict which neither he nor any diplomatist will be able to prevent, and by which his reputation may be ruined.

Simultaneously, the question of finding for Berlin a successor to Saunders was mooted in the office. The change he had long wanted, for family and other reasons, would have taken place but for the persistence of the German attacks upon him. Their abandonment after 1906 gave Bell the opportunity to discuss the matter with Steed. He agreed that Bell's suggestion of sending an unknown man to represent *The Times* was prudent.

We need to be very wary, to keep a sharp eye on Germany from Paris, Vienna and in Berlin, to report everything privately, but publicly to be childlike and bland. Then, when events compel us to speak, our voice will carry all the farther. Besides, the Germans and pro-Germans in this country and elsewhere are eagerly looking for some excuse to saddle us, *i.e.* England, with aggressive designs. When Cromer spoke in the House of Lords, a regular campaign of scare was started, and Friedjung, the Austrian historian and private adviser to

<sup>1</sup> Steed to Chirol, March 3, 1908.

#### STEED PROPHESIES ANNEXATION OF BOSNIA

Aehrenthal, telephoned to me in great excitement to know whether Cromer's speech was a prelude to war. I pooh-poohed the idea, attributed Cromer's warning to personal disgruntlement and managed to check the campaign. But if the paper took too strong a line in the immediate future, the Germans and our Radicals would saddle it with any conflict that may occur and, however right the event might prove us to have been, we should be discredited.<sup>1</sup>

As to the meeting of King Edward and the Emperor Francis Joseph, Steed reported that it was highly successful—so far as it went.

F.J. and the King were like two old chums together and Aehrenthal, who doesn't like us, was on his best behaviour. That doesn't mean that he won't play us another dirty trick as soon as he wishes to please Germany or to procure for himself a personal success. He is a very slippery customer.<sup>2</sup>

On the 15th when the King asked Steed for his opinion on the European situation the correspondent said that Austria-Hungary was preparing to annex Bosnia-Herzegovina. King found Steed's prophecy incredible, the more so since the Emperor had said nothing of it to him. On August 18, the King gave a brilliant dinner party to celebrate the Emperor's Jubilee. Steed found himself for the first time invited by the King to a political celebration in company with outstanding Austria-Hungarian officials and personages. The assembly gave the correspondent a fine opportunity for meeting significant international personalities, amongst them Mustapha Fehmi, the Egyptian Prime Minister, whom he found very apprehensive about the effect of the "Young Turk" movement upon the Egyptian nationalists. On the 19th Steed went to Karlsbad to see Clemenceau. As he reported to Bell, the French Prime Minister considered English public men grossly ignorant of foreign affairs. He believed that a European conflict was "not only possible but probable."

Perhaps his sense of the ignorance of English public men had been sharpened by a recent conversation with Lloyd George who, it appears, discussed with Clemenceau the position of the House of Lords without knowing that the French Senate is not composed of hereditary peers or that the U.S. Senate is made up of two Senators from each State of the Union. To illustrate his point, Clemenceau also told me of a conversation he had with Grey after attending C.B.'s funeral in London.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bell changed his mind about appointing an unknown man to Berlin and in July, 1908, Steed was appointed successor to Saunders. The appointment was rescinded in the circumstances described at p. 645.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Steed to Bell, August 14, 1908.

Alluding to the possibility of an Anglo-German conflict. Clemenceau expressed the conviction that the Germans would invade France by way of Belgium the moment hostilities with England began; and asked Grev what England would do if Belgium were overrun by the Germans. "It would make a great stir in England," said Grey, who probably did not wish to commit himself: but Clemenceau, who repeated Grev's words to me in English, was not satisfied and asked me what I thought "C'est maigre" I answered. "C'est bien maigre" he returned. "et lorsqu'on pense que ce n'est point à Trafalgar, qui était pourtant une bien brillante victoire navale, mais à Waterloo, qui était une bien petite bataille, que l'Angleterre a cassé le cou à Napoléon. on se demande comment il se fait que l'Angleterre ne se crée pas une armée sérieuse. Cent mille hommes en Belgique ne serait pas grand'chose. mais 250,000 voire 500,000 pourraient changer le cours de la guerre et sauver l'Angleterre et l'Europe de l'hégémonie prussienne." He insisted on the need for the utmost prudence on the part of England in her dealings with Germany, but expressed the conviction that France and England would not be safe against surprises until England has a national army worthy of the name. "As things are to-day," he said, "you are hopelessly unprepared. Even if you could find the men you would have neither the arms nor the ammunition for them to use. You could smash the German fleet et vous feriez ainsi un beau trou dans l'eau. En 1870 la flotte allemande n'existait pas,—ce qui n'a pas empêché aux Prussiens d'entrer à Paris." Clemenceau said that between Russia and France, agreement is now complete. Isvolsky reached Karlsbad vesterday and I may perhaps go over and see him.

Ponsonby tells me that at Cronberg, the Germans played the lamb to the British wolf with great insistence. While saying that they could not possibly modify their "poor little naval programme, framed years ago" they asserted that Sir John Fisher has "cooked" our and their naval returns so as to magnify the "German danger." William returned to his Tweedmouth argument that our fleet is kept up not to a two-Power, but to a three-Power standard.

On the 23rd, Steed's telegram from Marienbad included the information that M. Isvolsky had arrived there and had had some fifteen minutes' interview with the King. The message added:

As a tendency is already noticeable in some quarters to attribute special significance to the promptness of M. Isvolsky's visit to Marienbad, it may be well positively to state that the visit was entirely unpremeditated. During M. Isvolsky's stay at Karlsbad he will, doubtless, pay a more formal visit to King Edward, and it is expected that as soon as M. Clemenceau has recovered from his recent severe cold he also will take an opportunity of paying his respects to the King.

<sup>1</sup> Steed to Bell, August 22, 1908.

#### ISVOLSKY'S VIEW

A week later Steed reported to Bell his conversation with the Russian Foreign Secretary, which took place at Karlsbad on August 25, 1908:

When here last Saturday [August 22, 1908], M. Isvolsky asked me to come over to Karlsbad and lunch with him on Tuesday. At luncheon, when the Rumanian Premier, M. Stourdza, was also present, the conversation was general, but subsequently I had more than an hour with Isvolsky alone. He told me in full detail the story of the estrangement between him and the A-H Foreign Minister over the Novi Bazar Rlv. question and let me see that as long as he and Baron von Aehrenthal remain responsible for the foreign affairs of their respective countries, there can be no confidence between St. Petersburg and Vienna. He also made it clear that Russia would regard any attempt on the part of A-H to annex Bosnia-Herzegovina as a serious infraction of the Treaty of Berlin and as an issue calling for treatment by Europe as a whole. Despite signs to the contrary, Isvolsky thinks it incredible that A-H can be contemplating a move so dangerous as annexation at a moment so critical as the present. He expressed great relief at the Young Turkey movement which, he said, had saved Russia and England from the position of extreme embarrassment in which they would have been placed had they attempted to secure the realization of their reform proposals for Macedonia against the combined obstruction of A-H, Germany and the Sultan. Unlike M. Clemenceau, Isvolsky did not consider the situation in Egypt likely to cause us serious trouble and, also unlike Clemenceau, he showed apprehension about the turn of affairs in Morocco.

With regard to the Anglo-Russian understanding, Isvolsky said that it is daily obtaining a firmer hold on Russian public opinion and is becoming one of the settled bases of Russian foreign policy. Thanks to the understanding, the troubles in Persia had not affected Anglo-Russian relations. Local friction between British and Russian representatives who had not been able all at once to shake off old habits, had been neutralized by the two central Governments. Certainly the situation in Persia was still difficult. Russian trade was at a stand-still and Russian subjects were clamouring for protection; but Russia would do everything in her power to avoid intervention. Had the understanding with England not existed, Russia would long since have sent a couple of army corps into Persia. If the Shah could restore order, it would presently be possible to open up the country and to build railways according to the spirit of the Anglo-Russian understanding.

As to the future in Russia, Isvolsky spoke with confidence, though he is by no means blind to the many difficulties that have yet to be overcome.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Steed to Bell, August 29, 1908.

Simultaneously, Steed reported that when Sir Edward Goschen heard of his visit to Clemenceau he asked him to make a note of the conversation which would enable him to prepare the King for the line Clemenceau might take when he came to lunch with the King on Wednesday.1

When Clemenceau and Isvolsky had departed, Steed's report proceeded,

A long discussion took place between the King, Goschen and Ponsonby, upon Clemenceau's ardent plea for the creation of a British Army fit to help France in case France were attacked by Germany in consequence of an Anglo-German quarrel. Ponsonby took the part of the average Englishman who detests the idea of being entangled in any Continental struggle or of becoming in any way responsible for the defence of a Continental State. The King and Goschen, on the contrary, took up a standpoint much nearer that of Clemenceau. namely, that if France is ever attacked by Germany, it will be because of French friendship for England; and that, as France would be in this case involved in a struggle against heavy odds, England is bound to be ready to lend her prompt and efficient military aid. Were England to remain impotent to help France on land, France might be compelled to detach herself from us; or, if she stuck to us, to face the constant risk of defeat. Should France detach herself from us, we should be more than ever obliged to create an efficient army, since there can be no absolute guarantee that our fleet would be able to prevent a German invasion; the less since, in the event of French neutrality, German operations against us would be greatly facilitated. By the detachment of France we should be not only isolated, but discredited the world over and be regarded as a nation ready to take but not to give; and ready to expose our friends to risks, but to accept none ourselves.

Steed summarized the discussion as leaving the King and Goschen strongly in favour of the maintenance and development of our present friendships, coupled with thoroughgoing Army reform based on some form of obligatory service. At the same time the King was anxious for the cultivation of as good relations as possible with Germany, both in the hope of averting a struggle and in order to gain time to prepare, should war ever unfortunately be forced upon the country.

Thus the net effect of the meetings at Cronberg, Ischl and Marienbad was not to encourage limitation but the opposite.2

<sup>1</sup> Steed duly wrote the desired note regarding Clemenceau's views; also another regarding Isvolsky's. "It appears, however, that Goschen simply handed both my memoranda to the King; and as, after luncheon on Wednesday, both Clemenceau and Isvolsky said to H.M. identically what they had said to me, the King sent my memoranda on to Sir Charles Hardinge." (Steed to Bell, August 29, 1908.) For the text of Steed's note on Clemenceau, see *Through Thirty Years* I, pp. 286-7.

## THE BUCHLAU MEETING, 1908

There was a feeling "in the air" that the actualities of diplomatic and military strength favoured the Central Powers. On their calculation any Balkan move would find the Anglo-French and Russian entente at a disadvantage. Thus Austria-Hungary felt free to withdraw her gendarmerie from Macedonia without consulting Russia or the other Powers. Isvolsky's view, expressed to Steed, was that Aehrenthal's action was designed only to ingratiate himself with the Young Turks at the expense of Russia and her associates. He scouted Steed's statement that its real significance was to create a liberal background to the violent annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina as already planned.

But a week or two later, Milovanovitch, the Prime Minister of Serbia, informed Steed that he had learnt, in fact, from Isvolsky, who was due to meet Aehrenthal immediately, that Austria-Hungary had decided to annex Bosnia-Herzegovina. At the same time Isvolsky said that Bulgarian independence would be proclaimed and the question of compensating Serbia was discussed. The meeting that had been arranged between Isvolsky and Aehrenthal took place on September 15, 1908, at Buchlau. Within a few days, Steed learned from a Russian diplomatist present at the meeting that the two Ministers had come to an agreement about the Balkans, including Turkey.1 Aehrenthal had mentioned Bosnia-Herzegovina but had undertaken not to annex until Isvolsky had been given time to secure the assent of France and England. On September 23-4, Aehrenthal had certain conversations at Budapest with Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria.<sup>2</sup> On October 1 Steed learned of the probability of the announcement of Bulgarian independence from Count Henry Lützow, Austro-Hungarian ambassador to Italy. Isvolsky, after seeing Tittoni at the end of the month, proceeded to Paris, which he reached on October 3 to find awaiting him a note from Aehrenthal saying that circumstances had obliged Austria-Hungary to act at once. The independence of Bulgaria was to be proclaimed; and the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina to take place immediately.

The Times received the following telegram on Sunday, October 4, 1908, from its Paris Correspondent and printed the text on Monday:

Bulgaria will to-morrow (Monday)3 proclaim her independence. The proclamation will probably take the form of a national declaration by the Sobranye.

On Tuesday, Austria-Hungary will announce the formal annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Steed to P.H.S., September 23, 1918. (G. and T. IX, p. 776.)
 For Steed's account of these see G. and T. IX, p. 776.
 Monday, October 6. The rescript was dated October 7. (Cf. Steed, G. and T. IX, p. 778.)

The whole of the Powers, great and small, were in a state of indignation and even the Germans were out of countenance. Isvolsky's position, it was now plain, depended upon his being able to bring Aehrenthal to account at a European conference. It was not, obviously, a purely nominal business, involving no real change in status. On the contrary it raised the issue of the Southern Slavs. The matter was not made any less serious by the knowledge that Aehrenthal had achieved his end by means that were not usual among diplomatists. "As an illustration of Aehrenthal's diplomatic methods" Steed told the office, "you should know that when Goschen asked him officially whether there were any truth in the rumours of the impending proclamation of Bulgarian independence, Aehrenthal denied all knowledge of it." It was on the previous Thursday that Steed had learnt from Count Henry Lützow that the declaration was virtually certain; a week later "Goschen yesterday (October 8) took Aehrenthal sharply to task for lying, but he still stoutly denied having had any previous knowledge of Bulgarian intentions."1

In Britain a strong protest condemned the annexation. The Treaty of Berlin was considered sacrosanct and Britain, moreover, had later received supporting guarantees. The Times demanded explanations, without satisfaction; and, Chirol being abroad, Bell communicated direct with the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in London. Steed thus commented upon Count Mensdorff's statement:

Mensdorff told you nothing that is new and, I may add, nothing that has not been said by Aehrenthal in his speeches to the Delegation Committees and rabaché by the official press here. You probably did not remember the one argument that would have silenced him—the evidence of premeditation—because I know you have been too busy to read all my telegrams and may not have seen my reports to Chirol in May 1907 and again at the beginning of this year.

Yesterday in conversation with the Ambassador, after the presentation of King Edward's letter, the Emperor expressed surprise at the attitude of England and argued that the constitutional movement in Turkey had compelled Austria-Hungary to annex Bosnia-Herzegovina, as an indispensable preliminary to the granting of a constitution. The fact is (as I wrote two years ago in an article that was never published) that (1) everything had been prepared to annex Bosnia-Herzegovina in September, 1906, but that the unwillingness of the population stopped the scheme. There was no question of a constitution then. (2) In May, 1907, Aehrenthal, fresh from a visit to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Steed to P.H.S., October 9 1908. (G. and T. IX, p. 778.)

#### AFTER THE ANNEXATION

Bülow, proposed to Isvolsky the formation of a quadruple Balkan agreement, to include Austria-Hungary, Russia, Germany and France, each power to receive "compensations." The scheme provided inter alia for the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and for the opening of the Dardanelles. Its object was to prevent the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian understanding then taking shape. Isvolsky refused the offer. The Anglo-Russian agreement once concluded, Aehrenthal, in agreement with Germany, started the Novi-Bazar railway scheme in order to change the status quo in the Balkans and to bring English and Russian interests into conflict. Isvolsky then parried Aehrenthal's thrust very successfully. I wrote you from Marienbad an account of Isvolsky's state of mind before his meeting with Aehrenthal at Buchlau. At Buchlau everything that has since happened—except the Turkish boycott !--was discussed. How far Isvolsky was swindled by Aehrenthal or vice versa you can judge as well as I. What is certain is that the annexation scheme, the proclamation of Bulgarian independence and the whole business was the realization of a preconceived plan between Aehrenthal and Germany and that its main object was the same as before—to drive a wedge between England and Russia and if possible between England and France. The "constitution" argument is hocus pocus. If there had been no ulterior aim, Austria-Hungary could perfectly well have given a constitution without annexation and have held annexation in reserve as an ultima ratio in case the Serbs and Musulmans of the occupied provinces should flirt with Belgrade or Constantinople.1

That Aehrenthal and the Archduke had not only misled Isvolsky but deceived the Kaiser and Bülow, was discovered by Chirol in Berlin:

I heard in Berlin on undisputable authority that Francis Ferdinand discussed fully with William at the manoeuvres the "intolerable situation" in Bosnia-Herzegovina. But he did not tell him they were going to invade.<sup>2</sup>

Isvolsky, who himself did not disdain the use of subtle methods, admitted in the face of an intensely hostile Russian public opinion that he had been outwitted and was attempting by desperate expedients to extricate himself. Bell, in the absence of Chirol, was using his own opportunities of securing information regarding the next move. Sir Horace Rumbold confirmed several of Steed's statements:

Yesterday I heard something about Isvolsky from a perfectly straight source. I was told that when he met Aehrenthal—in September if I am not wrong—the latter fully prepared him for the impending

<sup>1</sup> Steed to Bell, October 19, 1908.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Chirol (in Paris) to Steed, October 23, 1908; he uses the word "invade" when he means "annex."

annexation of Bosnia, Isvolsky offering no objection, but suggesting the retrocession of the Novi Bazar Sandjak as a compensation to Turkey, and at the same time pointing out that it would no longer be possible to postpone the declaration of Bulgarian independence. Then came the visit of Prince Ferdinand to Pesth, with all its startling mise en scène, Austria thereby obtaining for herself the credit (if credit it be) of gratifying the Bulgarian aspirations, a clever stroke at any rate which at once cut away the ground from Russia as patron of the aspiring Ferdinand and his country. Inde illae irae at Petersburg. Isvolsky, I also hear from the best possible source, is accounted a remarkably untruthful gentleman.

The situation in the Russian Capital was, indeed, anything but placid. When Chirol, who had just left St. Petersburg, called upon Goschen he assured him that Isvolsky<sup>2</sup> proposed to protest before the Duma, or at least to criticize the annexation.

On the issue itself, a clear lead to the country was given by Asquith at his Guildhall speech on November 9. The Times acclaimed the Prime Minister's speech. It was

instinct with a breadth and clearness of view, and with an earnest but restrained patriotism, which must raise Mr. Asquith to a new and higher place in the estimation of his countrymen. . . . Mr. Asquith laid down clearly what the attitude of this country has been, and is, as to the breaches which have taken place of the Treaty of Berlin. We adhere to the doctrine accepted and consecrated by all the Powers, and notably by Austria-Hungary, in 1871. We hold now, as we held and declared then, that international compacts, like other compacts, cannot be arbitrarily altered by the act of any parties to them without the assent of all the other parties. The Prime Minister was not content with enunciating this general principle. He applied it very pointedly to what has recently been done, and to the stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin which those acts affect. . . .

The country had been deeply shaken. The Times made it clear that Asquith spoke solemnly. The Prime Minister was

resolved that, should a storm break upon the world, it will not induce us to falter or to fall short in any one of the special engagements which England has undertaken. We shall not be reluctant to grasp any hand that is reached out to us in good will and in good faith, but we shall stand by our friends, and we mean to keep ourselves furnished with the means to serve them to good purpose, should such service on our part become needful.

The Times disapproved, as "savouring of constitutional pedantry," Asquith's statement that it would be improper to

<sup>1</sup> Rumbold to Bell, November 5, 1908.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Goschen to Grey, November 5, 1908. (G. and T. V, No. 430, p. 486.)

#### THE POSITION OF ITALY

inform the country and the world of the number of ships it was proposed to lay down next year. But the important thing was that

He confirmed with manifest earnestness the assurance already given by the First Lord of the Admiralty that nothing will be left undone to keep the Navy fully abreast of both our national and our Imperial necessities. We welcome this gage of safety and of peace given the nation and the world in this anxious hour.

The leader concluded by congratulating the country upon its awakening to the lessons of the hour. "The greatness and even the safety of England rest in the first instance with herself."

The outlook continued to be grave, as *The Times*, itself not alarmist, emphasized in more than one leader. Stress was laid upon the need for strengthening the defence forces:

The present situation, not in Europe alone, contains so many elements of danger that every prudent Government will keep itself prepared for all eventualities, and every patriotic Englishman will endorse the wise words in which Mr. Balfour on Thursday urged his countrymen to look not only to the Navy but also to the Army as its necessary complement. (November 21, 1908.)

The repercussions abroad of the annexation were also farreaching. In particular the divergences of policy between Austria-Hungary and her partners in their Triplice that had existed were widening. The debate in the Italian Chamber had, *The Times* said, not gone well for the Alliance:

well aware that for some years past it has undergone a great change in its attitude towards Italy's partners in the Triple Alliance, and especially towards Austria-Hungary. But until now the indications of that change have been for the most part individually trifling. The significance which they have possessed has been due to the fact that they have been cumulative. Now for the first time the change itself has been publicly and almost ostentatiously proclaimed in a set debate, in which representatives of parties, widely differing among themselves, have seemed to vie in their desire to demonstrate to the world its extent and thoroughness. (December 7, 1908.)

Steed reported that the Vienna Press was construing Italy's attitude as a blow at the Triple Alliance. She was charged with repeating the "mistake of Algeciras," and with making an understanding with Russia, at a moment when grave difficulties were pending between Russia and Italy's Austrian ally. As for Germany, she was irritated by the independence of Aehrenthal's

action but felt unable to risk alienating her supporters in Vienna by any open criticism. Simultaneously, Isvolsky. through the medium of an interview in the Berliner Lokalanzeiger of December 7, 1908, threatened a formal alliance with Britain. He was probably aware that certain circles favoured staff conversations between Germany and Austria.

But Aehrenthal's personal position was itself in danger, though to what degree was unknown. Steed reported the view of Russian diplomacy:

Austria-Hungary is up to her neck in trouble, let her be smothered by it! Direct information that reaches me this morning from a quarter in immediate contact with Isvolsky says that feeling in Russia is growing very strong and that "non-acceptance of the fait accompli (i.e., the annexation) is certain; the negotiations are necessary in order to be able to say that everything has been done in order to induce Austria-Hungary to accept the Conference. . . ."

The debate in the Italian Chamber was a great blow to Aehrenthal. He was so anxious to forestall its effect on public opinion that though the report of Tittoni's speech did not reach here till late Friday night. the head of the Press Bureau was able, early Saturday morning, to read to a number of journalists a written statement in Aehrenthal's name—the statement published in the Zeit and given in my message of the 6th.

I may be able to inform you by the end of the week whether Aehrenthal goes or not.1

Chirol's tour of visits beginning at St. Petersburg and ending at Vienna had not escaped notice. His visit to Belgrade was denounced by Forgách, the Habsburg Minister at Belgrade, as undertaken for the purpose of organizing a Press campaign against Austria-Hungary.<sup>2</sup> Forgách denounced him again for encouraging lust for war in Serbia.3 Mensdorff in London complained to Grey in the first week of December. Later he had seen Tyrrell, who explained that Chirol was visiting the correspondents of The Times and that Chirol's own absence of bias could be seen from his articles then appearing.<sup>4</sup> Mensdorff then challenged the general tone of The Times which for two months had been sehr heftig. It was now being appreciated all over Europe that the annexation itself was a symptom and not the disease itself. The office was pessimistic and Braham now said so to Steed. The correspondent replied with a long statement of his latest estimate of the position as it appeared to him at Christmas:

Steed to Chirol, December 8, 1908.
 Austrian Documents, Forgách to Vienna, November 16, 1908, I, p. 45.
 Austrian Documents, Forgách to Vienna, November 26, 1908, I, p. 510.
 "The Situation in the Near East" in The Times; I, November 11; II, November 13; III, November 14; IV, November 25; V, December 1; VI, December 5.

#### THE SERBIAN REACTION

Like you I think the outlook dark. A prompt Austro-Turkish understanding might mend matters for the present. But as regards the European situation in general I am inclined to share the opinion expressed by Clemenceau to Cartwright—that Europe is drifting towards war.

The New Year began with the Serbian Foreign Minister's eagerly awaited statement. Milovanovitch's speech gave the Skupshtina<sup>1</sup> an historical preface in which he argued that it was fear of Russia that induced the Congress of Berlin to establish Austria as a Balkan Power; and, he added, the introduction into the Balkans of a Foreign Power like Austria was now seen to be a mistake and she should regard her "mission" as having been fulfilled. In other words the Serbs demanded from Austria the respect due to Russia's close racial and religious unity with the Balkan peoples. Only from Austria did a menace appear. If Europe, which desired no war, wished to settle the Balkan question, the annexed States of Bosnia-Herzegovina should be placed under European control. That was to be the task of the conference that Isvolsky had demanded. The underlying suggestion that Austria-Hungary should exchange the position of a first-class monarchical power for that of a central European Habsburg state on the Swiss model was highly disagreeable to Vienna and Budapest. Count Andrássy, Hungarian Minister of the Interior, published an emphatic reminder that the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina was necessary as a protection against the Pan-Serbian movement. Simultaneously, two Centrist and Catholic journals, the Vienna Reichspost and the Berlin Germania respectively, accused Bülow of lack of enthusiasm for action in Austria's interest. Localization of a possible war in the Balkans would be difficult, it was stated, and Bülow was invited to turn his attention to the task of mediation in the Balkans—as Austria's friend. The Berlin Correspondent of The Times thought the style of both articles so similar that both might have come from the same pen; and, he conjectured, the source might well be traced to Berlin. Perhaps the Wilhelmstrasse had a plan for intervention. But the question of what would happen to the balance of power if Austria were maintained as a Balkan Power with the aid of Germany was not easy to answer, and Berlin, here, was indisposed to be rash. The Serbian Minister's statement, made so positively, that his country's programme included the emancipation of Bosnia-Herzegovina to the extent of allowing economic and political relations with Serbia and Montenegro, would create an effective barrier between Turkey and Western Europe. The

<sup>1</sup> On January 2, 1909.

prospects did not interest Berlin. King Edward was there in the middle of January and a lessening in tension was noticed.<sup>1</sup>

But Aehrenthal was still in office and Vienna's reply to Milovanovitch was severe. The Serbian policy was illusory. Monarchy, as the Powers had been informed, would not permit the annexation to be considered at a conference and if a change of mood did not rapidly ensue at Belgrade, sad times for Serbia were promised. To his report of the statement, Steed added that in Central Europe the reaction from the British Press was awaited with the keenest curiosity. Meanwhile it was constantly being said in Vienna that Britain was animated by a deep hostility towards the Monarchy. "It is not too much to say that the will to believe in British animosity has been strong and widespread in Austria-Hungary since the middle of October." So Steed wrote in The Times, January 5, 1909. He thought it foolish to believe that Austria-Hungary would relinquish her hold upon both the provinces, or that she would consent to the establishment of local autonomy of the provinces under European control; but he thought that a measure of representative and self-government, as promised by Francis Joseph, would in fact be conceded sooner or later. The particular problem of Bosnia-Herzegovina was only part of the general question of the future of the Southern Slavs, who were tending towards political unity. The serious criticism of Aehrenthal's action, from the point of view of Austria-Hungary itself, was that it, and his policy as a whole, prejudiced an acceptable solution of the Southern Slav problem. As Steed believed that the Slavs provided the overwhelming majority of the subjects of the Monarchy, he thought the Slav question would be solved only when the Austria-Hungarian authorities were ready to assent to the formation of a federated Southern Slav State, under the Habsburg suzerainty. In default of any encouragement to such an evolution, the position must remain regrettably serious. On the same day The Times warned its readers of the menace to peace in a leading article:

The news which reaches us from Vienna this morning is undeniably grave. The speech which M. Milovanovitch, the Serbian Minister for Foreign Affairs, made on Saturday in the Skupshtina has been made the subject of diplomatic representations by the Government of the Emperor-King. Count Forgách, the Austro-Hungarian Minister in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cf. Steed to Chirol, January 16, 1909: "Cartwright believes we are on the eve of a complete Umschwung in Austro-Hungarian policy. Aehrenthal has been particularly pleasant to him of late and yesterday actually expressed regret to him about the Press attacks on England. Vederemo. I hope Cartwright won't let himself be taken in by any crocodiles' tears. Aehrenthal hasn't changed his skin but he may be scared by King Edward's visit to Berlin."

#### AUSTRIAN MOBILIZATION

the Serbian capital, has been instructed to inquire whether the published reports of the speech are correct, and, if their accuracy be admitted, to demand due apology. Should the authenticity of the reports be acknowledged, and an apology be refused, it is believed, our Vienna Correspondent states, that the Austro-Hungarian Minister has been directed to quit Belgrade. Our Correspondent adds that, according to private telegrams which have been received in Vienna, Count Forgách has already carried out his instructions, but no official information on this point is as yet forthcoming. (January 6, 1909.)

The attitude of Germany continued to be watchful but nervous, with Bülow following a policy of letting the Austrians alone. The dispatch from Berlin on the 8th reported that

The latest tirades of the Neue Freie Presse seem, for once, to have been considered to be food too strong for consumption upon this side of the Austrian frontier and the accustomed echo has not yet been heard here. On the contrary, the London correspondent of the Frankfurter Zeitung takes occasion to base some timely truths upon the despatch from your Vienna Correspondent in The Times of yesterday. He remarks that if the Neue Freie Presse really reflects the opinions of Baron von Aehrenthal, "the publication of this abuse would be another instance of the extraordinary maladroitness with which foreign policy is conducted just now in Vienna."

There was little evidence of nervousness in Vienna. Six weeks later, Steed privately reported to Chirol:

I have just heard that mobilization orders have been distributed within the last two days to officers and men of the reserve in Vienna, with instructions to join the colours within 48 hours of the general order for mobilization. Cartwright, with whom I lunched to-day and who saw Aehrenthal yesterday, tells me he has been warning our F.O. for the last fortnight not to imagine that the Serbian question can be ignored pending the settlement of the Austro-Turkish and the Turco-Bulgarian questions. The critical moment may not come for six weeks, but it may also come within a week or ten days. Cartwright believes that Aehrenthal is striving to settle things peaceably. I hope he is not mistaken. As Avarna remarked yesterday: "Bisogna credere alla buona fede della gente-e spesso il miglior modo di farsi ingannare!" A long conversation on Tuesday with Friedjung, who had seen Aehrenthal on Monday night, made on me the impression that Aehrenthal is not averse from "punitive" measures against Serbia. His words to Friedjung were: "Wenn es friedlich geht, desto besser; wenn nicht, denn nicht!" "Es" means the intended ultimatum calling upon Serbia to cease arming. My own opinion is that the ultimatum will be presented as soon as the Austro-Turkish agreement is signed. Aehrenthal told Cartwright yesterday that he expected it to be signed to-day or to-morrow.

The possibility of an Austro-Hungarian "punitive" march into Serbia opens up a vista of complications. The first is the dynastic question. It is considered here impossible that the Karageorgevitches can survive the conflict. Some talk of putting a European prince on the throne; Cartwright, on what authority I know not, believes Austria-Hungary might allow Nicholas of Montenegro to become King; but many level-headed people here think that it will be much easier to get into Serbia than to get out again and that a "punitive" expedition would lead to an occupation which would end in annexation. . . .

Aehrenthal insists that Austria-Hungary would merely march in and out; Avarna holds, or pretends to hold the same view; and Friedjung says that an occupation or annexation is impossible "because it would mean war with Russia and Italy." I asked Avarna vesterday if it were true that the Austro-Italian treaty of Alliance guarantees to Italy territorial compensation for any increase of Austro-Hungarian territory beyond the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He parried the question by exclaiming: "You don't think they really mean to occupy Serbia; there would be terrible complications!" Cartwright, on what authority I know not, holds that the right policy for Austria-Hungary would be to occupy Serbia, to secure if possible a plébiscite in favour of annexation and to compensate Italy by ceding the Trentino. The opposition of the Army and of the Germans in Austria to a cession of the Trentino would be very strong. At least £10,000,000 have been spent on fortifications there within the last few years. Germany also would object.<sup>1</sup>

A situation so inflammable inevitably stiffened the paper's demands for preparedness at home. The paper had never underrated the importance of defence. Britain was an island; Ireland was an island; both were vulnerable. In its leading articles and special correspondence, The Times had consistently for seven years supported the policy of naval development sponsored by successive First Lords Selborne, Cawdor, Tweedmouth and McKenna. Selborne, who knew Buckle well, was always ready to give facilities to the paper's Naval Correspondent, Thursfield. who was intimate to a peculiar degree with the chiefs of the Admiralty. It has been seen that he had not felt able to condemn Tweedmouth for acknowledging the Kaiser's letter. There was, however, no lack of confidence between the Editor and his naval adviser regarding the Estimates. And from the beginning of the New Year, when the state of international tension removed all doubt about the duty of this country, The Times gave even more powerful support to the policy of maintaining supremacy.

On January 19, 1909, Buckle's information was that Winston Churchill and Lloyd George, representing the "economists," were making another rally, claiming that four ships were <sup>1</sup> Steed to Chirol, February 18, 1909.

sufficient. McKenna, Buckle believed, was solid for six and intended to resign if they were not granted. To strengthen the hands of Asquith and Grey, Thursfield was instructed to write the leading article which appeared on January 22, and two days later the King's visit and the prospect of talks in Berlin encouraged a reduction of the programme, and Winston Churchill and Lloyd George were believed to be making use of the argument.

The Times, then referring to the growing apprehensions of the country and the reassuring effect of the Prime Minister's declarations, insisted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was in search of "hen roosts to rob" and the President of the Board of Trade (here The Times referred to the President's father. Lord Randolph Churchill), had a "hereditary zeal" for economy "especially at the expense of the defensive services of the Crown." It was necessary to demand from the Prime Minister a positive statement that no abatement of the standard of our naval strength would be tolerated. That standard, as the paper had reminded readers, was 10 per cent, over the combined strength in capital ships of the next two Powers. This was accepted by Mr. Asquith, the House of Commons and the country. Anything less would be our betrayal and ruin, for "the Fleet of England is her all in all." The rate of German building must be kept in mind. The Board of Admiralty, which was known to have the will to do its duty, must not be overruled.

In a week or two it was known in the office that the situation had changed, although the extent of the change was unknown. It was a matter of controversy whether the dates for completion of the German ships were as represented by Tirpitz; or whether the resources of the German shipbuilders, as estimated by Sir William White, would enable completion to be effected earlier. Thursfield, when Bell applied to him for his view, said that the estimated dates for completion were highly conjectural. Thursfield was now told by Buckle that he had it on "unimpeachable authority that the Admiralty are very seriously alarmed at the unexpected discovery that Krupp is now in a position to turn out gun-mountings enormously quicker than when White made his investigations, and quicker also than we can in this country." The awkward facts were that "while the Admiralty and McKenna are as firm as a rock, the assaults of the economists have been renewed." The Whips had reported a large Radical defection in the Lobby. Meanwhile the Admiralty was getting anxious about the way time was running on before

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they could get authority to put out their contracts. Thursfield was urged to make inquiries for the purpose of getting up a leader, but he was not to see Fisher lest that might compromise him. On February 23 the paper, benefiting from information secured by Buckle, was able to anticipate everything said a week after by the Prime Minister and the First Lord regarding the speeding up of the rate of German shipbuilding and the vast increase in the manufacture of secondary naval accessories and equipment. By February affairs had got to the point that it could be taken for granted in London and Berlin that if Austria did attack Serbia, Russia would declare war. The situation as it appeared in the office is described in a letter of Chirol's to Steed.

We are beginning to feel rather alarmed here about the continued tone of menace towards Serbia, maintained in the Austrian Press in spite of conciliatory official assurances. In St. Petersburg there is a growing belief that as soon as the weather is more favourable the war party in Austria will insist upon a military demonstration, to say the least, against Serbia and Montenegro. I should be glad to hear privately what is your impression. Any step of that kind would, of course, place Russia, and consequently ourselves and France, in a very difficult position. Our own interest is clearly that peace should be maintained, and as far as we are concerned we should not perhaps be disposed to scrutinize too closely the methods by which it should be maintained. But in view of our understanding with Russia we cannot afford to ignore her special interests which forbid any complete abandonment of her southern Slav protégés. We ought, after the [King's] Berlin visit, to be able to rely upon the cooperation of Germany making for peace, but I have my doubts! We should, at any rate, have an early opportunity of putting her professions to the test. The visit passed off quite smoothly-mainly because all contentious questions were carefully avoided on both sides.2

As there was no doubt that if Germany failed to support Austria Russia's declaration would be a certainty, Aehrenthal was requested by Berlin to give a clearer outline to his policy than he had hitherto done. The Kaiser was still opposed to the Austrian policy, but Bülow was more hesitant. Although German world policy was obstructed rather than hindered by Aehrenthal's moves, Austria was Germany's one reliable ally. It would not

<sup>1</sup> Buckle to Thursfield, February 21, 1909.
2 Chirol to Steed, February 18, 1909. France notified Russia on February 26, 1909, that public opinion felt that the Serbian demands were unjustified and it would not permit war on such an issue. Britain took the same step (Siebert, 73). G. and T. V, No. 524, January 21, 1909, reports a conversation between Sir F. Bertie, British Ambassador in Paris, and the French Foreign Minister about the proposed Conference on Bosnia. There is an editorial note pointing out that on January 19, The Times published the Austro-Turkish protocol before the Austro-Hungarian Government had received a copy. The Agreement was practically accepted on January 21, but the protocol was not actually signed until the 26th. A copy was presented by Count Mensdorff to Grey on March 6.

be too dangerous to support her, for Russia could not fight alone, and France was unwilling to join in on the annexation issue. Towards the end of February it was clear that Germany was ready to take a stronger line. Chirol informed Steed that

The answer which she [Germany] returned to our really very conciliatory and harmless suggestion that before making collective remonstrances at Belgrade we should get some idea of what Austria would do to temper the wind to the shorn lamb, was almost brutally contemptuous. It looks as if she were determined to encourage Austria to humiliate Serbia so that the latter's humiliation should rebound upon Russia. What is most unfortunate is that the Russians themselves appear to have lost their heads and to be incapable of anything beyond wringing their hands. They protest, most sincerely no doubt, that they do not want war but they talk of it as inevitable instead of attempting to think out any scheme for averting it. That they leave us to do.<sup>1</sup>

In March the crisis mounted to its full height. The increasing threat of Russian intervention forced Aehrenthal for the first time to take Bülow fully into his confidence, and it became needful to sacrifice some of the independence from Berlin that Vienna had lately been enjoying. Next, Vienna and Rome came closer together as Paris and St. Petersburg moved farther apart. On March 5, Aehrenthal notified Belgrade that the economic treaty would not be renewed until and unless Serbia revised her attitude. Fifteen divisions were put in readiness for dispatch to the Serbian boundary. In consequence the Serbs called out their reserves. At Vienna war was regarded as inevitable. The general staffs of Germany and Austria were confident that in case of war, victory would be theirs.

On March 4 Bülow instructed his Ambassador at St. Petersburg to urge Isvolsky to bring pressure to bear on Serbia and to let it be known that if this were not done Germany would permit Austria to proceed. The situation was fast developing into its most critical stage: "The news in this part of Europe," wrote Steed, "has never been more bewildering than now, and the telephone leaves one no leisure by day or night. The majority of the Ambassadors believe in peace, but a friend of mine who had a long audience of the Heir-Apparent on Wednesday came away with the impression that war is practically decided upon. In any case there must be a decision before April 1." Steed's date was a fortnight and four days ahead. His only hope was the Emperor, in whose determination to preserve peace he believed. On March 20 Steed, who had secured information that the Archduke had informed an intimate that war would

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Steed, February 25, 1909.

not take place, was able to send a reassuring message to *The Times*. Simultaneously, Russia, lacking support from England and France, decided not to back the Serbian refusal to recognize the annexation. In this situation *The Times* again emphasized the urgency of naval construction.

The point at issue in the clubs was, whether or not to secure safety Britain should lay down two complete ships in addition to the four already laid down at the earliest possible date. Ross, the writer of the article of March 1, claimed that it was necessary to lay down during 1909-1910 at least six vessels of the new type. This was the determined policy of *The Times* and, on the eve of a debate on the naval position Buckle instructed Thursfield: "Poke up McKenna," he said; for there was "a very general uneasiness and nothing but very firm and decided language from McKenna will reassure people." The Government statement was backed up by *The Times*, which, however, insisted that the ships must be put in hand without fail at once, and also they must be regarded as a portion of this year's programme, and not as an instalment of next year's.

On March 25 Steed's wire reported and described the intense excitement in Vienna. There were rumours that Russia was about to recognize the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, that the Serbian Crown Prince had abdicated and that Bülow was to resign. Russian intentions had first gained currency during the late evening of March 24. The situation was on the road to improvement, said Steed in summary. "Those who love peace may still trust confidently in the 'hopelessly pacific' tendencies of the Emperor Francis Joseph." The leader which Chirol wrote for the paper of March 25, before sending his letter to Steed, affirmed that it would be affectation to hide from ourselves that the danger of war is very near, though we cling to the hope that it may even yet be averted. It was a matter of wording and the negotiations had not been broken off. Sir Edward Grey's efforts might not fail but everything turned upon the intentions of the Austro-Hungarian Government. If they desire peace, it is simply incredible that they will incur the risk of precipitating a conflict in Serbia, with all its possible consequences, merely for the sake of a phrase. "Russia naturally takes the deepest interest in the fate of the little Serv kingdom, and it seems possible that Servia is being treated in such inexplicable harshness in order that the great Slav empire and nation may be wounded through her."

On the 26th The Times, not disguising its surprise at the news, announced that Isvolsky had given the German Ambassador in

1 Buckle to Thursfield, March 15, 1909.

St. Petersburg an assurance that if Austria-Hungary invited Russia to recognize the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina she would accede. "The Russian Emperor and the Russian Government," said the leading article," have acted with undoubted wisdom in coming to the decision." It was quite consistent with the pacific purposes Russia had in view throughout the crisis, and to act otherwise would be to "run the risk of plunging their country into a war, for which they know she is not at present prepared." Russia could not give Serbia help in an efficient degree. The Russians had had the real wisdom and the great moral courage to acknowledge the hard realities of the situation. "To M. Isvolsky in particular the gratitude of Europe, of Russia, and of the Slav race is in the highest degree due." The reason for Isvolsky's move lay, The Times understood (on the basis of a Paris report), in a letter sent by the Kaiser to the Czar. This was the really serious aspect of the affair from the British standpoint.

The Times was not prepared to rely upon reports that Bülow's resignation was imminent. "So great is his skill and so considerable are the advantages of different kinds which he possesses in the game, that he may even succeed in remaining in the saddle." The party representation in the Reichstag did, however, show real signs of upheaval in one direction and subsidence in another. What the latest development meant and would lead to, the office was at a loss to explain. The leader of the 26th was written by Flanagan. In the next twenty-four hours it was realized that peace had been saved by Germany's humiliation of Russia. It was unknown whether the Kaiser himself had intervened but it was not doubted that German action had assumed a character of peculiar pressure. Outstanding was the fact that Russia had been prevailed upon to give assurances to the Germanic Powers without the knowledge of the Powers with whose consultation she had been acting throughout the crisis. The office was much puzzled to guess the nature of the next step. Chirol thus described his feelings to Steed:

Your telegram of last night. The latest developments between Germany and Russia, which it helps to explain, have taken people here entirely by surprise, and for the present it seems difficult to know what construction should be put upon them. Is Russia going to be coerced back into the Three Emperors Alliance, and if so, will it be permanent? What becomes of the Triple Entente? It raises many perplexing questions. What influence has the strike in Paris had upon St. Petersburg? What influence our own naval debates? Or are the Russians themselves absolutely impotent? We are clearly in the presence of important developments which may affect the European situation and our own for years to come. It seems to be the advent of

the situation with which we were threatened as I saw pretty clearly in the earlier phases of the crisis—at the time I was in Vienna and St. P. I am afraid I have been too much of late under the influence of the optimism which prevailed here in the best informed quarters until about a week ago.<sup>1</sup>

For the following day's paper Chirol was employed to face the underlying issue: the relation of Germany to Europe. "Seldom has the European situation been so suddenly transformed and so vividly illuminated as by the diplomatic coup-de-main which Germany... has just achieved at St. Petersburg," he began. He ended a recapitulation of the salient facts with the statement that Grey's negotiations with Aehrenthal as to the precise form of words in which Serbia was to bend to the will of Austria-Hungary was now of secondary importance. But, he proceeded, "what Russia had been fain to do affords no sufficient reason for this country, or for France, who is still, we gladly observe, determined to act in close agreement with us, to give Austria-Hungary a blank cheque." We were willing to recognize "the new order of things in Bosnia and Herzegovina" as part of a general Near Eastern settlement but it should follow and not precede an arrangement which should guarantee Serbia against needless violence.

## Chirol proceeded:

The situation with which Europe is confronted involves much more than the fate of Servia. We trust it may not mean the permanent overthrow of the balance of power in Europe; but it certainly does mean that for the moment Germany has placed it in jeopardy by throwing the weight of her sword into the scales, not in any quarrel in which she is herself primarily interested, but in order to prove, to the world in general and to Russia in particular, that with her consent and support treaties can be broken with impunity and small States ground down to the dust, and that without her consent and support the peaceful diplomacy of other Powers is doomed to sterile effort. The course which she has chosen to adopt may for the moment produce the outward appearances of peace, but it cannot make for permanent peace. For no Power which in the course of history has arrogated to itself the right to dominate Europe, and to impose its own will by sheer force, has ever ensured or secured peace (March 27, 1909).

In conclusion *The Times* accepted without question the wisdom of Russia's action, compelled as it had been by "sheer necessity" and "Germany's dictation." It did not follow that a proud Empire with the resources of Russia would forget her traditions or "easily forgive those who have forced her temporarily to depart from them; neither will the Slav world forget or forgive." This country also had been rebuffed. A familiar moral was drawn:

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Steed, March 26, 1909.

#### THE PRICE OF PEACE

Even the Powers less directly interested cannot ignore the rebuff which has been inflicted upon them at the moment when they were pursuing by the ordinary methods of diplomatic negotiation the same purpose, save that of public humiliation, which Germany will doubtless claim the credit of having achieved by a display of the mailed fist. There is one moral at any rate which Englishmen should lose no time in drawing from these startling developments. The British Navy has stood more than once between Europe and the claim of some great Continental Power to be the sole and supreme arbiter of its destinies.

The leading article ended with a call to use the debate due to take place within a few days in the House of Commons as an opportunity to remove all appearance of divergence of opinion on the maintenance of British naval power—" the real bulwark of European freedom." Chirol emphasized to Steed that the leader just quoted was not "written without the book." "Why," he asked, "should we be parties to making Serbia drain the cup to the dregs? Is it not better that the ruthlessness of Germany's Austro-Hungarian policy should be allowed to expose itself in all its brutal nakedness—better for the future if our people are to learn the lesson it conveys?" There were, indeed, shining lessons to be learnt all round.

The military element in Austria-Hungary was disappointed of its hopes. From Vienna, Steed prepared an analysis of the factors that had produced a peaceful settlement in reply to Chirol's request of March 26:

The pivot of the whole crisis has been the relationship between Berlin and Vienna. In this relationship there have been at least three elements—the intercourse between the Emperor William and the Emperor Francis Joseph, between William and the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, and between Bülow and Aehrenthal. The last was unsteady and uncertain. Between the Emperors William and Francis Joseph, relations were cordial enough on the surface but this cordiality was neutralized at bottom by Francis Joseph's distrust of William's intrusiveness. The William-Francis Ferdinand relationship was created ad hoc. Whether it was thoroughly intimate there are no means of judging. The Archduke doubtless thought that William would be useful for the go-ahead policy he advocated; and William wished to establish a first mortgage on the Archduke's future. All went merrily until about three weeks ago. What caused the change I know not; but, about that time, Francis Joseph made a determined stand in favour of peace and the Archduke soon afterwards joined the peace party. It is desperately hard to be certain. But I think that what turned the scale was some proposal from William, or from the German General Staff, for military cooperation that would have brought Prussian troops into Galicia and eventually Saxon troops into

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Steed, March 26, 1909.

Bohemia and Bavarian troops into Salzburg and Northern Tyrol, the ostensible object being to leave the entire Austro-Hungarian Army free to deal with Servia and Russia.<sup>1</sup>

The upshot for Serbia of the annexation incident was that she undertook to "abandon the attitude of protest and opposition" to it which she had maintained since its announcement. Serbia undertook also to reduce her Army to a peace strength and to "live henceforth with Austria-Hungary on a neighbourly footing." The incident was thus formally closed for Austria-Hungary and for Serbia.

But the implications of the successful annexation and of the abortive protests against it remained the source of anxious consideration to the Powers, above all to Russia. Aehrenthal had his reasons for discontinuing pressure upon St. Petersburg and preferred to put upon British "intrigues" the whole responsibility for the crisis. Britain, it was claimed, had gone to extreme lengths in encouraging Serbia, and the anti-British campaign in the Austro-Hungarian Press continued unabated. Aehrenthal, who had taken it for granted that the annexation greatly increased the prospects of Anglo-Russian staff conversations, bent his efforts to prejudice Nicolson's position in St. Petersburg, where he possessed powerful friends. Instructions were given to the Vienna Press accordingly.<sup>2</sup>

In P.H.S. the view was maintained that the real significance of the crisis lay in the tactics of Germany. The effect of Germany's "shining armour" upon certain Russian circles was seriously disquieting. Chirol, taking up the correspondence with Steed at the point at which it had been left by his letter of April 3, wrote that

We cannot conceal from ourselves that the two Powers combined have inflicted upon us and upon the Triple Entente a very serious rebuff. I am concerned about the consequences in St. Petersburg, where I hear the Court Party and the reactionaries are making a desperate attempt to get the Tsar to throw himself back on to the policy of the old Three Emperors Alliance. Incidentally they are making a dead set at Isvolsky. He has played his cards so badly and lost his head so thoroughly that I have not very much sympathy for him personally but his fall at the present moment would, I think, produce a bad effect, or, at any rate, be a very bad symptom, especially if he were to be succeeded by Hartwig, who is the favourite of the pro-German Party. That would mean very possibly a very serious rift in the Anglo-Russian lute, as he knows perfectly well that he was

<sup>1</sup> Steed to Chirol, April 3, 1909.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Aehrenthal to St. Petersburg, April 4, 1909. He adds that *The Times* correspondent in his dispatch of March 30 had noted the tone of the Press. (Austrian Documents II, p. 249.)

withdrawn from Teheran because we complained that he did not play up to the Anglo-Russian understanding. Moreover, it must be remembered that, to Isvolsky's credit, he was the negotiator of that understanding and it is as such that he has chiefly incurred the hostility of Germany.<sup>1</sup>

Russian criticism of Isvolsky was severe, but in spite of Germanophile influence, anger turned upon those to whom Isvolsky had "surrendered." While the Germanic Powers expected the immediate dropping of the Minister, a meeting was arranged between the Czar and the Austrian Emperor. It was to take place in June. Meanwhile the Pan-Slavs and other classes of Russian society resolved to put their country in a state of readiness to act as the protector of the Slav world. Aehrenthal's diplomacy continued to seek to draw Russia into an extension of the Triple Alliance by, incidentally, placing Britain in the worst light.

In August, 1909, when Steed saw King Edward at Marienbad, the King, who was no longer so optimistic regarding the future, complained of the unscrupulousness of the Austrian Press. As to the future the King, while not a pessimist, recognized that the task of preserving peace was bound to be more difficult than ever and that increased support needed to be given to those elements in Europe that were working for that end. The destiny of the monarchy and of peace in Europe seemed to Steed to turn upon the transformation of Austria-Hungary into a cantonized kingdom under the Habsburgs. This was what the Serbians wished to see and, Steed now believed, might be accomplished if only the Southern Slavs supported by the Bohemian Slavs and the Moravian Slavs would organize for that object.

A serious study of some 7,000 words under the heading THE PASSING OF THE "STATUS QUO." FROM A CORRESPONDENT,<sup>2</sup> published on August 11, 1909, passed in review the antecedents and consequences of the annexation. Meanwhile, as *The Times* assured its readers in a leading article of August 30 (the pen was again Steed's), there was the issue of Austria's diplomatic independence; it was the "one issue upon which it is of high importance that no misapprehension should exist."

The Fremdenblatt, associating itself with our references to Count von Aehrenthal's alleged desire to win for his country a position of greater diplomatic independence, declares that this desire will not impede a better understanding between England and Austria-Hungary, "provided that people in England do not interpret such a policy on

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Steed, April 7, 1909.

<sup>2</sup> The author was Steed.

the part of the Dual Monarchy in a sense which, in view of our German ally, we do not wish to give to it." The position of Great Britain in this respect was clearly indicated at the close of our article on the 11th inst., when we pointed out that it is not for England, or for any foreign Power, to determine what policy the Dual Monarchy should or should not adopt, and observed that it passes the wit of any statesman to perceive what advantage at all commensurate with the risks involved the Dual Monarchy could gain by detachment from Germany. The idea that it has been the object of Great Britain to "detach" other countries from their alliances, or to surround Germany with a ring of semi-hostile States, is precisely one of those perversions of the truth which, we regret to say, have been too readily propagated in Germany and accepted in Austria-Hungary . . . it is eminently desirable to know whether, in their relations with Austria-Hungary, British statesmen will have to reckon with a Power conscious of its own individuality or with a Power that, at every critical juncture, will feel bound, over and above its obligations as an ally, to identify itself with another Power towards which British intentions are not less amicable, but in dealing with which Great Britain has a different class of interests to safeguard.

The reception of the leading article in Vienna was fairly cordial. On September 5 Sir F. Cartwright wrote to Sir Edward Grey about his interview the previous day with the Minister. Aehrenthal, commenting on the better relations between Austria-Hungary and England, attributed the friction over the Bosnian crisis mainly to the unfortunate tone of the Press, now more moderate, on both sides. Cartwright said Aehrenthal did not refer directly to the leading article of August 30 on the relations between England and Austria-Hungary, but referred instead to a letter received from Prince Kinsky, dated from Marienbad, in which allusion was made to King Edward's friendly feelings towards Austria. Cartwright informed Grey that Kinsky's letter was written with special reference to The Times leader. Aehrenthal had said to Cartwright: "Je cherche à faire une politique de la monarchie," which Cartwright found interesting as the leading article concluded with a hope that Austria-Hungary would develop an individuality of her own in the conduct of international politics, without however abandoning her alliance with Germany.

In the state of confidence in which the Monarchy found itself in the autumn, everything seemed to indicate the possibility of further incident before long; and, with the possibility of further trouble, the old question: Austro-Russian relations. Steed's conviction was that Austria-Hungary would contemplate no arrangement with Russia which did not force Russia to go barefoot to Canossa. He had, he reported, seen communications

from the Ball-platz to the Russian Embassy, dated as recently as the 10th inst., in which a tone of haughty hostility was scarcely disguised by the usual urbanity of form. It was the settled intention of Austria-Hungary to profit by Russian weakness so as to obtain the lion's share either of territory or of influence in the Balkans. "In view of this situation," said Steed,

It is to the interest of Austria-Hungary herself that she should not be driven violently into the Balkans but should remain a factor in European equilibrium while exercising her natural influence over the Southern Slavs. Cartwright now declares this view, which I have always propagated in season and out of season, to be the view of Aehrenthal. If it is, so much the better; but what Cartwright says that Aehrenthal thinks is so much at variance with other and more positive indications, that one is compelled to keep an open mind.<sup>1</sup>

Aehrenthal so far had steered a course midway between that of the Archduke, who demanded a war against Italy with all its risks, and the Emperor, who insisted upon peace with all its benefits. The Minister had followed towards Serbia a "politique de la monarchie." It was his equivalent of an Austrian patriotic policy and was attended by fewer immediate risks. The ultimate risks were disregarded. His own experience as Ambassador in St. Petersburg enabled him the better to see and estimate the risks of the Serbian coup. It had been planned in opposition to Berlin, though carried out only with the Wilhelmstrasse's diplomatic support in St. Petersburg. That the German support was unwilling made it the more welcome to Vienna. Aehrenthal's measure of success was not to be gainsaid; nor, the Vienna Correspondent warned, overvalued, for it was not complete. The Germans, after all, had proved that they were necessary to Austria's, or Aehrenthal's, salvation. And this was not the end.

It was not yet appreciated in Europe that one of the major effects of the annexation crisis was to inflame both Pan-Slav and Pan-German sentiment. It followed that Aehrenthal's power to pursue a policy of Austria-Hungary's own was illusory. The *Kaisermächte* were welded together closer than ever before by the events which culminated in the Russian and Serbian surrenders of March 31, 1909. The indissolubility of the alliance's foreign policy held good equally for William as for Francis Joseph. What it meant for the other partner in the Triple Alliance was thus described by Steed:

The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador to the Quirinal, Count Lützow, whom I have known pretty intimately for twelve years, called on me yesterday morning and told me he is leaving his post because of the impossibility of improving Austro-Italian relations. He asked

<sup>1</sup> Steed to Chirol, September 15, 1909.

me not to publish the news because, he said, it may make a bad impression in Italy when it is known. Before going to Rome five vears ago-1904-Lützow, who was then Permanent Under Secretary at the Ballplatz, told me what his programme as Ambassador would be and was good enough to ask me how I thought he could best carry it out. I gave him what information I could, some of it unpleasantly frank, but he found the truth of it when he got to Rome and has always shown himself grateful. His programme was, roughly, to bring about a better understanding between Vienna and Rome in order that their intercourse might be direct instead of being carried on via Berlin and that there might be an Austro-Italian counterpoise to the predominance of Germany in the Triple Alliance. As long as Goluchowski lasted. Litzow made good headway, but under Aehrenthal things have gone from bad to worse, owing chiefly, Lützow says, to the utter inability of Aehrenthal to understand the Italians and their position in Europe. The annexation policy . . . gradually rendered Lützow's position untenable.

Lützow referred also to the harm done by the Austro-Hungarian military party and by General Conrad von Hoetzendorf in talking constantly of a military promenade to Milan for the purpose of giving the Italians a licking. (The same tone prevails in the entourage of the Heir-Apparent.) As long as Francis Joseph lives there may be no danger; but Francis Joseph is in his 80th year, the political situation is ticklish, the Heir-Apparent is headstrong and, as a semi-Bourbon de Sicile, hates the House of Savoy. Not only the Military Party but the Army and Navy as a whole have for years been inoculated with the idea that war with Italy is certain and not far distant. The first lesson given to the Einjährig-Freiwilligen [one-year volunteers] is that the next fight will take place in the Lombard plains; and such Einjährige as know Italian receive preferment. Lützow is afraid that, when his retirement is known, public opinion in Italy may call for the removal of Avarna from Vienna. He added that the communiqué on Bethmann-Hollweg's visit here, with its reference to Italy, had been imposed on Aehrenthal by Bethmann-Hollweg.

In view of this information I had yesterday afternoon a long talk with Avarna. You will remember his cautious, timid manner. He was scared to find that I knew of Lützow's retirement and implored me not to publish it. He confirmed what Lützow had said about the communiqué and added the detail that it had been drawn up by Bethmann-Hollweg and Schoen at Munich on Bethmann-Hollweg's way here and that Aehrenthal had been obliged to accept it unchanged. He said it was perfectly possible he might be swept away by Italian feeling when Lützow's retirement became known, and added that he (Avarna) had already warned Aehrenthal that the withdrawal of Lützow and the appointment of his successor, Mérey, would be regarded in Italy as indicating a change of policy.<sup>1</sup>

The forthcoming visit of the Czar to Italy was, in the circumstances, wormwood to the Vienna Court and Aehrenthal. So

#### LESSONS OF THE ANNEXATION

far he had succeeded, to every appearance, all along the line. The Times was not yet willing to accept Steed's conclusion that Aehrenthal's policy, in so far as it was designed to achieve the independence of Vienna from Berlin, had, in fact, achieved the opposite. Steed put it to Chirol on October 21, 1909, that

We were not bound to sustain the theory that Aehrenthal has triumphed all round nor to hide the fact—now that the knots are coming to the comb—that he, who aimed at a policy independent of Germany, has succeeded so far in binding Austria to Germany hand and foot through his management of the annexation crisis and by spoiling Austro-Hungarian relations with Russia, Italy and ourselves. not to mention the Vatican.

Thus Steed regarded the annexation incident as a triumph for Germany. If this view did not recommend itself in London, it was particularly disliked in Vienna. For some time Steed's statements that the Press of Vienna was, generally speaking, not Austrian but either German or Jewish had been a source of complaint.1 The printing in The Times of the Vienna Correspondent's comments upon a recent article by Dr. Heinrich Friedjung on Austro-Russian relations, disposed Aehrenthal to instruct Mensdorff to make representations to the Foreign Office. He was to say that although Aehrenthal was indifferent to attacks in the press, he could not look on calmly at systematic attempts. made again and again, to poison friendly relations with England. upon which he placed the greatest value. In this connexion, as the Ambassador was aware, The Times and particularly its Vienna Correspondent, Mr. Steed, entirely failed to treat politics in an objective manner. As an illustration of what Aehrenthal objected to. Mensdorff was to point to the article so recently printed as October 27, 1909.2 When Mensdorff in due course made his representations. Tyrrell had no difficulty in pointing out that The Times had been expressing itself in a sense opposite to that of Steed's articles since the Editor was in favour of lessening tension. Tyrrell added that he would convey a hint to The Times.3 He doubtless mentioned the matter to Chirol whom he often saw.

Several incidents in the autumn disturbed the equanimity of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister. Aehrenthal's policy of reaching an understanding with Russia was not meeting with success. The Bosnian annexation was far too humiliating and too recent. The Czar's visit to Racconigi in October had been the occasion of no small comment. The high importance of the transactions between Isvolsky and Tittoni which were its accom-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Mensdorff, who had met Chirol at lunch, reported (February 5, 1909) to Aehrenthal to this effect; and added that Mr. Steed held that the Neue Freie Presse represented the interests of Berlin and the Synagogue. (Austrian Documents I. p. 801.)

2 Aehrenthal to Mensdorff, November 3, 1909. (Austrian Documents II, p. 516.)

3 Mensdorff to Aehrenthal, November 12, 1909. (op. cit. II, p. 531.)

paniment was known to few in Italy and to none in Austria. The visit was speedily overlaid, in the minds of the general public at least, by the outbreak of controversy between the supporters of Aehrenthal and those of Isvolsky concerning the Buchlau agreement. After Racconigi Russian circles became convinced by Isvolsky's explanations that he had been victimised. Novoye Vremya now said that it was hopeless for Aehrenthal to try the tactics successfully employed against Delcassé. Steed in reporting the Russian journal's statement added the assurance that henceforth Austria-Hungary might see the wisdom of trying to secure Russia's friendship by the simpler and surer means of renewing friendly relations with Britain. The year ended with a rebuff for Aehrenthal which originated in an injudicious pursuit by Friedjung of the Minister's own tactics of the "accomplished fact." In this case an article by the historian in the *Neue Freie Presse* had made use of documents supplied to him and now alleged to be anti-Serbo-Croat forgeries. The matter was serious since it was the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office which had supplied Friedjung with the documents. During the trial, which took place in December, Steed was present at every session. "I have made my own shorthand note of all the important statements," he assured Chirol.<sup>2</sup>

In the result, Aehrenthal was too gravely compromised to be able to come forward to Friedjung's assistance. Part of his case against the Serbo-Croats was based upon a dispatch alleged to have been addressed by Milovanovitch, the Serbian Foreign Minister, to his minister in Vienna. A paragraph described the relations between Serbia and Britain as cordial and concordant and as being covered by two agreements of 1906 and 1908. Milovanovitch is further represented as saying that "the support of Great Britain and the Cabinets of St. Petersburg and Paris, that are at one with Great Britain, is thereby conditioned." The document also placed £1,200 at the disposal of the Serbian Legation in Vienna for use in disruptive propaganda. Steed described the interest in Southern Slav circles when, on December 13, "the well-known Liberal Czech Deputy, Professor Masaryk," placed in the hands of prosecuting counsel Milovanovitch's reply to his telegraphed inquiry regarding the alleged documents brought forward by Friedjung's counsel: "My alleged instructions to the Serbian Minister at Vienna and to the Serbian Consul at Budapest are gross inventions of a forger equally ignorant of the form of our written intercourse and of the fundamental lines of our policy."

<sup>Steed's dispatch, November 23, 1909.
Steed to Chirol, December 19, 1909.</sup> 

#### THE SUPILO TRIAL

On the 22nd the case ended with a declaration by Friedjung that enabled the plaintiffs to withdraw the prosecution. "The historian acknowledged that the documents in question must be eliminated and further that he would not like to base any claim upon the remaining documents." It was not a very manly expression of regret, thought the libelled Croats and Serbs. Supilo, their leader, behaved with remarkable generosity. It was understood, said the correspondent, that his attitude was to some extent influenced by positive assurances that the system of corruption, espionage and oppression applied in Croatia was promptly to be swept away.

"Every phrase of M. Supilo's utterance came as a revelation to the public," wrote Steed, "which seemed to understand at last the moral force of this herculean Dalmatian peasant who appears to combine the temperament of a Cato with the statesmanlike power of the old Ragusans." The Correspondent concluded that the trial would mark an epoch in the relations between Vienna and the Southern Slavs. It would also be a turning point in Austro-Hungarian home and foreign policy. The vindication of the Southern Slavs from the charges of an organized "conspiracy" greatly increased Steed's interest in their cause. The very absurdity of the forgeries served to enhance its justice. The Times said that "no Englishman could ever have supposed that the amazing fabrication which Dr. Friedjung accepted as a dispatch from the Serbian Foreign Minister was genuine, for the simple reason that it attributes to their country a policy which no sane Englishman could possibly . have entertained." It was noted that there had been no questioning in Vienna itself of the charge that Britain initiated in Serbia a policy hostile to Austria. "The stories of British intrigues were doubtless founded on the testimony of witnesses of the same kind as those who plied the Ball-platz with the papers over which Dr. Friediung was set to labour." (December 23, 1909.)

It was hoped in the office that the incident would clear the air. The great Austro-Serbian crisis of 1908-1909 had been surmounted, and there was room for the feeling at the end of 1909 that further disturbance of European tranquillity was unlikely, as *The Times* cautiously expressed it, "barring unexpected developments." The paper was not in the humour for foreign adventure. *The Times*, which had barely surmounted its own crisis, was busy with the task of rehabilitation. The main burden was carried by the Managing Director, with the Editor's hearty support.

## XXI

## REFORM IN THE OFFICE

ETWEEN August and October, 1908, i.e., in the six months that followed the transfer of The Times, Bell worked harder I than ever he had done even during the previous twelve critical and exciting months. He still conducted the managerial correspondence with his own hand, himself still arranged all the details of the appointments of the staff, alone dealt with "X," alone argued with Walter over the printing costs; acted in important respects as deputy for Chirol. Although in June Harcourt Kitchin had been promoted from the City Office to the post of Assistant Manager, the Managing Director's own tasks were but little lightened since Kitchin was active mainly in the new advertising department. In fact, the assurance Bell gave to Chirol in March that he would delegate some of his work had not been carried out; and was unlikely to be, for Bell was now a dictator within the office responsible only to an "unknown" Chief who was, he believed, prepared to remain at a distance. Bell, for his part, preferred overwork to the surrender of an atom of power or responsibility.

During the early summer months the identity of the purchaser of *The Times* became known to a widening circle. Four months after the transaction had been completed "X" was drawn into the open by an inquiry from "a very high quarter." Lord Esher called upon him one day in July. "So that there should be no possible misunderstanding in that quarter" "X" reiterated the gist of their conversation in the following letter, dated July 9, a copy of which he sent the same day to Buckle:

My position is merely that of one who wishes to see this country represented to the world by an absolutely independent newspaper, always, I trust, in my lifetime, worthy of its high traditions; the organ of neither parties, sects, nor financiers; its columns open to every shade of politics; a newspaper run not as a profit-making machine at all.

The Times is, in fact, in my life, what a yacht or a racing stable is to others—it is merely my hobby.

I propose, if I am spared, to leave in my will an endowment and a suggestion for its direction by such a Committee as that of the British Museum to preserve it, perhaps for some generations.

## "X" REASSURES LORD ESHER

Nothing could have been more satisfactory to Bell, after nearly twenty years' financial anxiety as Manager of The Times, to have the assurance that for the rest of his life he could rely upon "X's" capital and his intentions as expressed in the letter to Buckle. Nothing, too, could have been more gratifying to the Board of Directors and the other chief servants of the paper than the expression of these sentiments, which were in entire harmony with what was understood to be "X's" agreement. "X's" suggestion of some parity of status between The Times and the "British Museum" was understood in a complimentary sense. The long continuance of the pleasant relations which existed at the moment between the new proprietary and the old staff was taken for granted, and the material reforms suggested by the journalistic experience of Northcliffe and Kennedy Jones and now made possible by their new capital were put in hand amid general cooperation. John Bland, a capable engineer, was made head of the Printing "Department," as it now became, and proceeded to instal giant Goss presses and Monotype composing machines. The recruiting of a force of advertisement canvassers was entrusted to another expert, James Murray Allison. The making-up of the paper was put in the hands of George Murray Brumwell, formerly Buckle's secretary and later a home and foreign subeditor, one of the few members of the old staff who had elsewhere gained practical journalistic experience at the "stone." Meanwhile "X" (as he was still referred to in P.H.S. notwithstanding a measure of unofficial recognition) exercised his personal charm in social relations with Bell. Chirol and Buckle, and other members of the staff, entertaining them hospitably both at Sutton Place in Surrey and in St. James's Place in London. Nothing could exceed his kindness to them and thought for the interests of the paper and of the staff. "X" bestowed upon Chirol compliments he had never received from Arthur Walter. He urged Bell to spend all that was necessary, "now that he had capital."

"X" showed the Editor a sympathetic interest in his work by sending him day by day, for several weeks in the winter of 1908 and early spring months of the following year, notes of his impressions, page by page, of the current issues of the paper. These notes, which then contained a far larger proportion of appreciation than of criticism, were usually of obvious journalistic value, though Buckle, of course, found that their daily consideration added appreciably to editorial labours. The notes came to him through the Managing Director, who, in "X's" anonymous" period, was his sole means of communication with the office. The addition thus made to the burden of

managerial routine gradually became serious, but, what was more important, the communications became less advisory and more supervisory in character. Slowly, the office began to realize that the character of "X's" interest in the principal members of the staff and their work was changing. The directions and suggestions which poured in upon Bell were far too numerous and varied even for a man of his enormous capacity, but he bent his shoulders to a burden that few men at the age of 61 would have assumed, and have preferred to discharge alone—the duty of managing "X" and managing The Times and both with the object of safeguarding the standards of the paper. The paper was no small problem. The economic side of it was for the first moment for twenty years requiring no attention. But the administrative side badly needed an overhaul. From the middle of the year, Bell had recognized the necessity of major changes in the foreign staff. Saunders, for instance, who had represented The Times in Berlin for more than ten years, had often asked for a change. and would have had his desire but for the long continued agitation against him. The Germans had for some time ignored him and he was anxious to take the opportunity to transfer. Chirol's health had never been good. Winter in England had invariably upset him, and he lately had been more than ever a prey to influenza and had developed a touch of heart trouble; by this time he was beginning to suffer from sleeplessness. The series of missions which Bell, in his compassion, had constantly invented or authorized for Chirol had usually involved beneficial sea voyages, but it was plainly impossible to rely upon him for anything like consistent work in the future.

It was necessary to recondition the Foreign Department, and he could take advantage of the international situation, which was on the surface relatively tranquil after the sensation of the Kaiser's correspondence with Lord Tweedmouth. The Liberals had been two years in power. They had already tried to secure a naval agreement with the Germans. No such crisis as that produced by the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina was in sight and the period that began in April when Asquith came in, with McKenna in Tweedmouth's position, Haldane at the War Office, and Lloyd George as Chancellor of the Exchequer, promised to be one of pacification. Opportunity to take advantage of it must be seized.

In view of Chirol's constant breakdowns Bell rightly thought that something must be done to strengthen the Department, and in the spring the moving of Saunders from Berlin was considered. The provision of a possible successor to the head of the Foreign Department had been under discussion since 1905. At that time Amery, should he decide to stay, was favoured. If, as the event turned out, he should choose a political career, Chirol recommended that Morrison be brought from Peking. Nothing, however, had been said to either, and it was clearly reasonable that Saunders might be tried. It remained, however, that except for a short visit to St. Petersburg, Saunders's experience was limited to Germany. But, of course, Germany presented special and acute problems. A problem of another order was Washington. Smalley was ageing; his post was offered to Steed who declined it on the ground of his ignorance of affairs outside Europe. Nothing more had been done. Steed had indicated his desire to have Paris whenever Lavino, his predecessor at Vienna, should retire.

Bell saw he could not afford to procrastinate further with this complex of problems. He resolved to bring Saunders into the office. Accordingly, Saunders was informed in March of his promotion, due to take effect in June. The changes were made by Bell without consulting "X" or Chirol, both of whom were out of the country; there is no evidence that Buckle was informed. Bell at this time was glad to use with a minimum of consultation the power he felt he possessed. After taking Saunders from Berlin the next most important change was, naturally, the filling of the Berlin post. Bell took the further step of appointing Steed as Saunders's successor, again without consulting Buckle or Chirol. The two correspondents were informed accordingly on May 4. On May 1 Chirol returned to London, though not to work. His health showed little real recovery and, as his doctor forbade his attendance at the office, he did not for some time learn that Steed had been posted to Berlin. In the meantime Steed, writing from Vienna, urged upon Bell his belief that:

Unless you appointed Maxse you could hardly find an Englishman and certainly no member of our staff whose appointment to Berlin would be so obnoxious to the German Government as mine. Saunders is not liked but I am hated in Berlin. I have the strongest reason to believe that the German Government beginning with the Emperor and Bülow would regard my appointment as a provocation. They think that Saunders has helped to damage the position of Germany in regard to England. But they regard me as having helped to spread distrust of Berlin in this country (Austria-Hungary) and in Italy, and as having worked against German leadership in the Triple Alliance

and the extension of German influence in and around the Adriatic. If you care for details I can supply them. I believe that if I went to Berlin I should be expelled at the first moment of tension with England.<sup>1</sup>

Bell's answer was characteristic: Vienna always made any man who lived there for more than two years see "things" under the bed, such as Jesuits and Jews; a move, and he had asked for one, would be healthy for Steed; Berlin was the most important European centre politically, scientifically and commercially; it was Steed's own business to overcome any "prejudice you believe to exist and to establish your position as fearlessly, as independently and at the same time with as much good judgment as your predecessor has shown." Thus instructed, Steed dutifully made his preparations during June, although it was understood that he need not proceed to Berlin until the summer was over.

On June 16, 1908, Saunders bade farewell to the officials of the German Foreign Office. He saw the Chancellor and talked with him amicably and frankly, though hardly profoundly, for two hours. Bülow observed, blandly, that during the period of Saunders's representation of The Times in Berlin, relations between Germany and Britain had not improved. Whatever could be the reason? Saunders, determined on such an occasion to deal with commonplaces, mentioned several reasons he thought obvious. One was the impression that the Emperor Frederick had not been understood or fairly treated in Germany. Secondly, it was felt, and believed by Queen Victoria, that Caprivi's friendly policy towards Britain had contributed to his fall. There were, in addition, political incidents, such as the telegram to Kruger. The Prince's own references to Britain in the Reichstag during the Boer War had not always been happily worded. More recently, the real extent of German interest in Morocco hardly seemed to justify the action in fact taken. Finally, said Saunders, there was the disposition of the German Press to give an anti-German interpretation to the understandings arrived at by Britain with Russia in 1907. Such considerations were to be reckoned with before Bülow's own view, that the chief cause of misunderstanding was that the two peoples did not know each other enough, could be accepted as the explanation. Bülow insisted to Saunders that it would never have been the wish of the German Government to use the issues of Morocco, nor on his part to use Macedonia, to test the strength of the Anglo-French entente. It was the "unreasonable" attitude of the French Minister at Tangier, that made German public opinion a power

<sup>1</sup> Steed to Bell, May 10, 1908.

### SAUNDERS'S LAST INTERVIEW WITH BÜLOW

to be reckoned with in the Wilhelmstrasse, and Germans were easily alarmed; also people were alarmed in England.

When the British North Sea Fleet had been strengthened at the expense of that of the Mediterranean, a council had been held in the room in which they were sitting, and Admiral Tirpitz had declared that this measure could only mean that an attack against them was meditated. Count Metternich was fortunately present and said that in England there were equally people who were just as persuaded that a German attack was being planned; these fears he felt were equally groundless on either side. It was unfortunate, the Prince added, that at a time when relations were more cordial the two countries had expected, respectively, a little too much of each other. Perceiving this oblique reference to the negotiations of 1901, he said that "Germany could never have consented, as Mr. Chamberlain had once suggested, to be the sword of Great Britain on the Continent."

When Saunders's approaching departure was known, the Berlin Press which had for years clamoured for his expulsion remained silent. The Wilhelmstrasse did not then desire to disturb the post-Tweedmouth lull. Bülow, who in January, 1907, told W. T. Stead that he failed to understand how The Times could keep in Berlin a man like Saunders, must be credited with great self-control; since Saunders, being asked if he knew who his successor would be, thought fit to give the name, upon which the Chancellor said nothing. Yet as Steed said, the German Foreign Office had reasons for keeping him out of Berlin. His telegrams from Vienna proved him an uncomfortably penetrating observer of German policy in Austria-Hungary and elsewhere. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that Bülow made any representations to Saunders, or to anybody else, on the subject of his successor, then or later. Less than a fortnight after bidding farewell to Bülow Saunders left Berlin and came direct to London. He presented himself to Chirol at Queen Anne's Mansions and, although no evidence of it remains, had a discussion with him on the political situation, and it was probably then that Chirol learnt of the plan to transfer Steed. Chirol, who could hardly have failed to share Steed's doubt as to the advisability of so transferring him, questioned Saunders on the matter. Saunders appears to have returned a non-committal answer. doubts of the wisdom of the transfer were positive. Also he, of all men, could least be expected to appreciate Bell's acting in such a matter without consulting him as Head of the Foreign Department. He was not prepared to let the appointment take its course.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Saunders's oral statement of his interview with Bülow made to Count de Salis, as reported by him to Grey, June 26, 1908. (G. and T. VI, p 98.)

In the meantime, Steed made his unwilling preparations to get to Berlin in the early autumn. Chirol's health meanwhile continued to prevent his attending to business and his doctor ordered him out of town on June 24. Before going to stay with Cecil Spring-Rice, he had a visit from Sir William (now Lord) Tyrrell, then secretary to Sir Edward Grey, which he thus reported to Bell:

Tyrrell came to see me yesterday morning. He had heard from Buckle that Steed was going to Berlin, and he is much exercised about it, as he thinks Steed (whom he knows) would be the wrong man there in the interests of the paper, and in those of Anglo-German relations. His arguments impressed me, and I asked him to go and see you and talk it over with you. I have *great* confidence in his judgment and he has been a most valuable friend to me, and to the paper too.<sup>1</sup>

But Bell, having instructed Steed, against his judgment and protest, to go to Berlin, was in no mind to alter the plan. Chirol was, therefore, unable to hold out to Tyrrell any possibility of his being able to move Bell. A new step was contemplated.

On July 2 Tyrrell invited Buckle to call upon him at the Foreign Office. He told the Editor that Sir Edward Grey had instructed him to say that the projected appointment of Steed to Berlin, if now made, would be open to objection.<sup>2</sup> Buckle, according to his habit, left no written note of this significant conversation or of the reasons why *The Times* (i.e., Bell) should alter its plans in accordance with suggestions which came from or through official channels.<sup>3</sup> The representations were strong enough to make Bell think over his plans. But he did so with great unwillingness and took what was, for him, the curious step of approaching "X" in July, 1908, in order to ascertain whether he had any view he would like to put forward. It was not a good idea, so it turned out.

Bell's health, at the time, was giving his friends some anxiety. He was, they considered, overworking.<sup>4</sup> In July he was, in fact,

<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Bell, June 24, 1908.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> On July 14 Grey invited Lloyd George to meet Metternich to discuss naval limitation and he had further talks with Lloyd George and Metternich on August 1. Later in the month Lloyd George visited Berlin and discussed reduction in speed of building.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> In July, 1940, a search in the Foreign Office archives failed to discover evidence of any German suggestion that Steed's appointment to Berlin would be unhappy. On the other hand, Tyrrell knew that Chirol was strongly opposed to the transfer and that objection (he now says) was in part due to what he had heard from Saunders.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Cf. Monypenny to Bell, June 24, 1908: "I plead guilty to saying, not that you were over-worked, but that you were overworking: and I went not at all on the fact that you have been under a continuous strain for 15 months and are now doing work which could be done just as well by a subordinate. No one knows better than you that that is always a blunder. It is absurd that you should be able to say in reply to my two petty criticisms of Thursday's paper 'The mistakes were mine.' We talked no nonsense about getting you away for any long holiday at the moment, but I urged 'X' to put pressure upon you to economise your energies till things have settled down and the strain is finally over. Even a temporary breakdown on your part would be a very serious matter at present—that is the utilitarian aspect: and it is not only as a Director of The Times that I have an interest in your health and welfare."

#### STEED A RED RAG TO THE TEUTONIC BULL.

feeling to the full the weight of his accumulated responsibility to which was added the necessity of smoothing his relations with "X" by informing him of affairs in which he was likely to take an interest. "X," glad to have an opportunity to assert his authority on a matter of such importance strongly advised Bell against sending Steed to Berlin. It was not to be forgotten, he said, that a man of judgment was required in Berlin and Steed in Vienna had alienated the sympathies of Hungary, almost our only friend on the Continent. Bell, considering the expression of criticism by "X" as a casting vote, at once (July 3) wrote to Steed that "various causes have contributed to the reversal of the decision" to transfer him to Berlin.

Chirol, who had not been informed of the change of plan, had received meanwhile fresh evidence that the transfer of Steed to Berlin was not recommended by the professional diplomatists:

Lascelles is here (Spring-Rice's) on a visit to his daughter, and I was going to write to you myself again about Berlin, and suggest that, unless you decided to leave Chilver [Saunders's assistant] in charge indefinitely with a view to giving him the substantive appointment should he prove equal to it, the best thing might be to try O'Neill [Lavino's assistant] there instead of at Vienna. Both Lascelles from his rather pro- and Spring-Rice from his resolutely anti-German standpoint, agree that Steed would be a red rag to the Teutonic bull, and neither in the public interest, nor in that of the paper is it, I think, desirable that we should in present circumstances aggravate our position in regard to Germany. O'Neill, if Lavino's estimate of him is correct, will not be "got at" by the Germans, but on the other hand, he will not have Steed's penchant for pin-pricks,—perhaps not his ability to give them!

After discussing other personalities Chirol expressed his lack of enthusiasm for Chilver, or for O'Neill, offered no constructive suggestion, and ended his letter with the statement, based doubtless upon the remarks of Lascelles and Spring-Rice, "It is unpleasant to find how very general a distrust there is of Steed."

This was the first occasion upon which mention had been made, in writing, of any "distrust" of Steed, "general" or otherwise. The phrase, coming on the heels of the talk with "X," impressed Bell; and Steed, who had written him on the eighth, was sent a reply that far exceeded the "tartness" which Bell customarily reserved for erring correspondents. It sounded an entirely new note; plainly "X" had used the opportunity to awe Bell:

PRIVATE

My dear Steed,

July 10, 1908.

In reference to the remarks in your letter of the 8th about Austrian comment on German affairs, I must tell you that I have been rather appalled at the positive distrust in your discretion which you seem to have established in quarters where I should least have expected it. I have never been able to get up an interest in Austrian politics nor to count her as anything but a possible source of disturbance to others, of no practical force in herself, so that I am afraid I have followed your telegrams less carefully than those of others—from other capitals.

But the suggestion that you should go to Berlin raised such an outcry that I had to enquire into its reason and I find that while nobody doubts your ability you are regarded as a firebrand of the most dan-

gerous type.

Saunders, who was not loved in Berlin, was regarded as an angel of peace compared to you. I was warned by the highest authorities that sending you to Berlin would place us wholly in the wrong and that if you were even in Paris, the Entente would not last 12 months.

The feeling is too general to be the result of any personal dislike—indeed many who approached me hardly knew you by name, but you are credited among other things, with having converted into our bitterest enemies one of the few nations<sup>1</sup> that stuck by us during the Boer War.

I think it right that you should know this and endeavour to acquire a better reputation for sobriety of judgment. Yours ever,

C. F. MOBERLY BELL.

Steed, who, like the rest of the staff, was ignorant of the identity of "X," answered that the Managing Director did not claim to be a judge, out of his own knowledge, of the matters involved. Bell was confessedly deciding them on the basis of "intrigue," and the correspondent felt himself at the mercy of "interested calumny" at second hand. Steed had too much affection for Bell to suspect him personally of malice towards any foreign correspondent, and too much respect for *The Times* to deprive it of his best services as long as he was responsible in Vienna.<sup>2</sup>

1 The reference to Hungary, often referred to in "X's" correspondence with the office

is proof of his inspiration.

"I remember less distinctly what I wrote on this occasion because it was a letter in which I was the mouthpiece of others rather than of myself. It was probably also paternal in pointing out that he was getting the reputation of being too pugnacious. You yourself say that you thought there could not be so much smoke without some fire, but I saw much more smoke than you did, and surely with that idea it was only kind to tell him

of it." (Bell to Chirol, November 3, 1908.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In November, Chirol, after his return from Vienna, reported that Steed considered Bell's letters harsh. Bell's defence was that Steed had not said so to him and that, in consequence, Steed had either misled Chirol, or Chirol had misunderstood Steed. As for the letters themselves, that of July 10: "so far as I remember it, arose I think in this way. Not only Tyrrell but many other people pointed out the danger of Steed's going to Berlin. Buckle got remonstrances. I forget whether you did [i.e., Bell had not remembered Chirol's report that Tyrrell, Spring-Rice and Lascelles were opposed to Steed's going to Berlin], but at the same time Northcliffe pressed very strongly (too strongly as he has since admitted) the great harm Steed had done in alienating the sympathies of Hungary, our one supporter during the Boer War.

#### SUDDEN DEATH OF LAVINO

The "firebrand" letter made curiously little difference to his peace of mind. The political situation in Vienna was of far greater interest than the "intrigue" in London. It was in these circumstances that in August Steed visited Marienbad and saw King Edward, Clemenceau and Isvolsky, as chronicled in the previous Chapter.1 And it was here that he learnt from Ponsonby news he felt inclined to interpret as explaining the terms of Bell's "firebrand" letter, i.e., that the control of The Times had passed into the hands of "Harmsworth." At the same time he met Paul von Schwabach, British Consul in Berlin and the moving spirit in the banking house of Bleichröder. Schwabach was so much impressed by Steed's glänzende Unterhaltungsgabe that he gave Holstein (who was a customer of the bank) a picture of the man and an outline of his hopes for a measure of military conscription in Britain as the only means to ensure world peace. Schwabach was also able to report that Steed, though named as Saunders's successor, was, in fact, and to his pleasure, not leaving Vienna.<sup>2</sup> The revelation that "X" equalled Harmsworth explained much, thought Steed, including Bell's instructions and counter-instructions and his "firebrand" letter. To his mind, the Foreign Department was in the hands of an overworked Bell and a sick Chirol, both acting under the influence of a new, anonymous and absent proprietor of barely predictable views. The Manager and the Foreign Director were getting upon each other's nerves as well as those of their correspondents. It was found that the new arrangements Bell had made in the Foreign Department were not working well. Saunders had been found disappointing in the office. Routine did not suit him. "He is not as good as Braham though he is a prince of correspondents," noted Buckle for Bell's benefit in July. There had been some disagreement with Chirol which called for Bell's intervention.

The sudden death on August 9, 1908, of the Paris Correspondent, William Lavino, involved a complete reconsideration of the Foreign Department. The career of Lavino had become identified with the later policy he had been so successful in forwarding, i.e., the Anglo-French entente. It has been seen that Lavino when in Vienna leant towards an understanding with France and Russia and had gone to Paris with that policy in mind. His death drew condolences from the French Government headed by the President of the Council, Clemenceau, as well as from prominent members of the Opposition. The tributes in the Paris Press were numerous and cordial and the telegrams received

<sup>1</sup> Page 614, supra.
2 Paul von Schwabach to Holstein, August 22, 1908, in Aus meinen Akten, Berlin 1927, p. 149; for additional discussion of the "firebrand" letter see Chapter XXIV.

by the office included a message from Colonel Picquart, Minister for War. Lavino's services to *The Times*, in particular since he succeeded Blowitz, were, as the French acknowledged, political. He had not merely taken advantage of a tendency, he had forwarded and directed it.

The appointment of Lavino's successor was inevitably considered from the political standpoint—at least by Chirol, who never lost sight of the political tie. Bell, who, temperamentally, inclined to send to an important capital the best available man, was, in the case of Lavino's successor, not indisposed to listen to Chirol's representations regarding the importance of the political considerations. After discussion, and with Buckle's recent estimate of Saunders as a "prince of correspondents" before them, they decided to ask him to take the vacancy. Saunders, who had been abroad for twenty-five years or more and had only just been promoted to London, had no wish to go to Paris. His firm disinclination to go abroad again was met by an appeal from Chirol that few could resist:

My dear Saunders,

Your letters of 22nd and 23rd reached me here last night, and of 24th this morning. Your telegram yesterday morning had of course prepared me for their tenor, but though I quite understand your point of view—whether personal or journalistic—I venture to hope that you will give the matter yet further consideration.

The Paris vacancy is, you must remember, the fait nouveau which has completely upset all our calculations since we suggested your coming over here. Paris is going to be, I believe, if anything, a more important post than it has ever been, for the relations of France with ourselves have become of late a factor of immense importance in themselves—not merely negatively as in the old days of our antagonism, but positively as practically the key-stone of the European equilibrium. Germany being what you and I know her to be, it is of very great importance that we should have in Paris a man who is thoroughly familiar with her modus operandi and will not be led into playing into her hands through ignorance of her game, as might well be the case with very able men who had not had your experience, or through lack of judgment and excess of zeal, such as Lavino, with all his good points, sometimes displayed.

I believe you have not only greater qualifications for the post than anyone in the service of *The Times*—including myself, for you have over me the advantage of a more phlegmatic temperament, but quite exceptional qualifications which would enable you to play a most useful and important part in the highest interests of the country as well as of *The Times*. Frankly, your qualifications for that post are to my mind much greater than for the Foreign Department here, where

#### SAUNDERS PERSUADED TO GO TO PARIS

your limitation on the whole to European politics must handicap you. Even your thoroughness, which was so valuable in Berlin and would be not less so in Paris, might be almost a drawback here, where one must perforce often be ready to turn round suddenly from the things one knows to those one doesn't know very much about and skate over exceedingly thin ice.

To be brief—you are the best man we could have here for the Foreign Department, but you are not so indispensably the best man for it as you are for Paris. That is the conclusion at which both Bell and Buckle have arrived independently, and which I cannot but endorse. We had long consultations yesterday and the more we talked it over the more fully we agreed.

On the personal aspect of the question I am not going to dwell, because I believe you will not refuse to subordinate them to the interests of the paper. I will only say that after all Paris is not like Berlin, which in so many respects is a great deal more than 24 hours' journey from London. Paris is now almost a suburb of London, and if you have a good staff there is no reason why you should not run over here pretty frequently. In fact it will be very desirable that you should do so, if, as I hope, your position in Paris enabled you to exercise a scarcely less direct and certainly not less important influence in shaping the policy of the paper than you would exercise in No. 16.

The one really important thing to-day is Saunders—Paris.

Yours ever,

V. C.

In support, Bell wrote asking Saunders "to do me a great favour—to add to your numerous great services to *The Times* and to help me and them out of a great difficulty. I might even put it more strongly—I ask you to do a service to the nation." He reminded Saunders that Paris was nearer London than was Blairgowrie and held out to him the hope of week-ends in London. Saunders reluctantly agreed to go immediately while Braham succeeded to his position in the office. Saunders's appointment to Paris was considered a good solution of more than one difficulty. Accordingly he left for Paris on September 2.

But the arrangement left Steed with a new grievance. On grounds of seniority in the paper's service, and the logic of precedent, he had long looked forward to representing *The Times* in the capital city nearest to London and he had been abroad for nearly twenty years. The vacancy at Berlin was temporarily filled by O'Neill, formerly Lavino's assistant at Vienna and Paris. Shortly afterwards, the marriage of his brother gave Steed the occasion to visit Bell. The outstanding difficulties were then discussed rather than removed, but Bell came to the conclusions (1) that, while there was ground for criticizing Steed for his "pugnacity," the criticism of his political judgment by "X" had

not been justified, and (2) that the best way to dispose of the issue, while leaving the future for later treatment, was to bring "X" and Steed together.

At the beginning of September, while Saunders was taking up his position at Paris, "X" gave Bell and Steed an opportunity to talk to one another and to himself. They met at Frankfort-on-Main. Nothing seems to have been said—certainly nothing was done—about Steed's grievances. He was completely loyal to Bell and restricted his conversation with "X" to the giving of his own opinions about journalism, his own idea of the opportunity now before The Times, and the like. Steed pointed out, in characteristically frank fashion, that, apart from a hurtful effect upon the circulation of the paper, the public identification of The Times with Northcliffe at this time would close to its home and foreign staff many private sources of information that were vital to the maintenance of its prestige. In the august circles he had been frequenting at Marienbad only a few weeks previously it was said. Steed proceeded, that if the "yellow" methods of the Daily Mail were to be introduced into The Times, the Court and diplomatic information customarily reserved for the paper would no longer be forthcoming. Steed also emphasized privately to Bell the necessity of continuing the policy of keeping "X" and his connexions in the background. He made the same point very boldly in correspondence which Bell, not without a purpose, showed Northcliffe. The device apparently succeeded. "X" protested to Steed his irrevocable determination never to "interfere" with the paper.

6 September, 1908.

Dear Mr. Steed,

Mr. Bell sends me extracts from your interesting letter from Marienbad.

The correspondents of the *Daily Mail* know nothing from me, or my colleagues, about *The Times*, save Mr. Little, who at Mr. Bell's wish undertook to point out the many blunders in the social portion of the journal.

I am not, nor ever shall be, the "Chief" of *The Times*; do not interfere in the conduct of the paper, and have only once, in 1889,1 visited Printing House Square. *The Times* is conducted entirely by Messrs. Walter, Buckle, Bell, Chirol and Monypenny who understand the task better than I ever could.

The King knows my position exactly<sup>2</sup> and if there were gossip at Marienbad its effect will evaporate as the world gradually learns

1 Probably a mistake for 1898.
2 The reference is doubtless to his talk with Lord Esher between July 8-11. "Since this talk he [Northcliffe] has written to me a curious letter, a confession of his idea in buying the control of the paper and his intentions in regard to it, should he die. Both are creditable to him." (Journals & Letters of Lord Esher II, p. 327.)

## BOURCHIER'S "INFAMOUS TELEGRAM"

that it will possess a more independent and less American Times<sup>1</sup> than of late.

I very much agree with you as to the need of reticence as to Anglo-German affairs. Silence and preparation will do more good for peace, in my judgment, than brilliant "beats."

Faithfully yours,

Northcliffe

The introduction to "X," which Steed had not sought, thus accomplished, he returned at once to Vienna. Nothing had been said to him about the Paris appointment, rendered vacant by Lavino's death and occupied by Saunders. It was not, of course, the obligation of the Manager to consult him or anyone else as to the appointments it was decided to make and Steed neither applied then for the post nor then made any official complaint that he had not been approached. Nor was it mentioned at Frankfurt. Steed's resolution to return home at leisure was unaffected. He was prepared to resign from *The Times* rather than remain at Vienna indefinitely.

In the following month a new dispute disturbed the office. Bourchier, who as the paper's Balkan Correspondent had risked his life a hundred times during a period of twenty years, received without warning on October 9 a severe wire signed by Bell but written in Chirol's plainest of plain English.<sup>2</sup> The adoption of "X's" methods was doubtless unconscious. The office and the foreign staff had been used to Bell's stern letters, but the telegram to Bourchier was unprecedented.<sup>3</sup> Bourchier referred to it for years afterwards as the "infamous telegram":

You have so completely misled us or yourself been misled in regard to the situation that you are entirely discredited as an authority on Balkans and have lost usefulness there. We are sending Gordon Browne and advise your leaving on his arrival.

Next day Bourchier was ordered by another telegram to leave Sofia at once for Belgrade. The (as yet uninvestigated) charge against him was that he had not warned the paper until the evening of October 4 that Bulgarian independence would be proclaimed on October 5. Bourchier had not known what had

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to Hooper and Jackson.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For Bourchier's career see Chapter XXIII; the circumstances in which the "infamous telegram" were sent are described at p. 727.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A month later Bell tells him that "I thought your suggested telegram somewhat too strong, but I adopted your words and sent the telegram in my name and took the opprobrium; although I had to say later that it was sent with your and Buckle's cognizance, I did not intimate that I thought it perhaps too strong." (Bell to Chirol, November 1 1908.)

been, until a day or two before the event, the personal secret of Prince Ferdinand, who was not in Bulgaria but in Hungary, until the last moment. He had telegraphed on October 1 all he knew (i.e., that events pointed to an early proclamation of Bulgarian independence). This telegram, however, was held over at the office and only published on October 5, when the impending proclamation had been divulged by the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in Paris. Steed, however, had given on September 23 confidential warning to the office that the proclamation was probably coming, but his warning and his suggestion that Bourchier be communicated with were both disregarded.

Bourchier, on receipt of the "infamous telegram," communicated with his nearest colleague, for whom he entertained great affection, desiring his counsel. He met Steed half way between Vienna and Belgrade, gave the facts and showed the telegrams. When Steed returned to Vienna he forthwith wrote out his resignation and sent it to Bell. On hearing that Bourchier had been the source of Steed's information and the immediate cause of his resignation, Bell sent Chirol to St. Petersburg, Vienna, and Belgrade to inquire into the circumstances of the Bulgarian proclamation. 1 As a result of his investigations Chirol was unable to substantiate the charges against Bourchier; which, made as they had been in a telegram en clair, were, in view of Bourchier's political position at Sofia, equivalent, as he urged, to a public libel. Chirol's expression of his regret and promise of reinstatement were accepted by Bourchier. Steed had now to be dealt with. His position was that he had long felt and had more than once said that he had been abroad too long; he had never been of the opinion that the career of a foreign correspondent was a career in itself but rather a preparation for a career. He had refused St. Petersburg because it was too far from London; and refused Washington, because having five or six languages he saw little point in using only one. He thought he deserved to be considered as Lavino's successor at Paris; he desired it as it was nearer London, as well as the goal of any foreign correspondent's ambition.

When Chirol arrived in Vienna, Steed delivered in writing a statement of his views and intentions. Chirol attempted to soothe his feelings by reminding him that he was only 38 and that he would be young enough in ten years' time to go to Paris. This suggestion confirmed Steed's resolution to resign from the foreign service when he was 40. Chirol, perhaps with his apologies to Bourchier fresh in his mind, was impressed by the justice of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For the Bulgarian declaration, see supra p. 615; cf. p. 727, infra.

#### RESIGNATION OF STEED

Steed's case, but he could not shake his resolution to take up work elsewhere in two years' time. Nor was Steed deterred from confirming it again when, upon Chirol's return to London and his report to the office, Bell postponed a final settlement with the offer to Steed that when he left Vienna he would "do his best" to fit him into the Foreign Department at Printing House Square.<sup>1</sup>

The Manager's answer to Chirol's reminder that in July he had written severely to Steed was that he had forgotten the terms of his letter, and that if Steed had a grievance he should have communicated with him and not with Chirol; that in past years many correspondents had complained of Chirol's letters without inducing Bell to comment unfavourably upon them, and he reaffirmed his intention to make an offer to Steed, sometime in the future, regarding a possible position in P.H.S. Naturally no forecast was made of the situation that would arise with Chirol and Steed both working in the same department. Instead, Bell with the new funds to dispose of, made some amends to Steed by sending a handsome bonus, adding that his work was "excellent in every respect." With the Bourchier incident in mind, Steed's suspicions were not thus easily set to rest. He was inclined to censure Chirol or Flanagan, or Hubbard, or, indeed, anybody but Bell, who was the least to blame; "clerical" or "Jesuit" intriguers must have been at work on his mind. That Chirol thought Bell had treated him badly and was his champion Steed did not know. And neither Chirol nor Steed knew the extent to which "X" had intervened with Bell. Thus Steed held to the view expressed in his memorandum handed to Chirol on October 27, 1908: that "accuracy of judgment, political consistency and diligence are no protection against interested calumny; and that a superior, while admitting he is not in a position to judge personally of one's work, may allow his attitude to be influenced by slander." Steed appreciated the fact that Chirol was a sick man, but neither "X" nor Chirol nor Steed recognized that the root of the Bourchier and other troubles was the overwork and ill health of Bell, who could not disengage himself from responsibility.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Bourchier and Steed incidents rendered awkward Chirol's future relations with the foreign correspondents, in particular with Steed. If the rebuke to Bourchier originated in excessive zeal to raise the standard of news-getting to a level approved by "X," the effect was the opposite intended.

Bell had shown "X" Steed's confidential memoranda of August, 1908 (i.e., the private dispatches from Marienbad, where he had seen King Edward, and from Karlsbad, where he had the conversations with Clemenceau that he later reported to the King). (See supra p. 612.) On journalistic grounds Steed's reports delighted "X," and when in due course he learnt of Steed's resignation he inquired the reasons for it. The ascendancy of Steed and the decline of Chirol date from this time.

It was by no means only controversies affecting members of the home and foreign staff that Bell was engaged with during the latter part of 1908. Work of many kinds interfered with the correspondence, legal and other, he was conducting, but he was not less determined to proceed, when he had the opportunity, with the claims regarding the alleged excessive profits of the printing business of the Walters. The successful acquisition of the printing business itself on the terms accepted was but one consequence of the operation of the Bell-Sterling contract, to the letter of which Walter had appealed when insisting upon being paid his full rent. 1 But if Walter was to appeal to the letter of that agreement, so also would Bell. Upon that agreement he would take his stand. The claim for restitution of excessive printing profits-if these could be proved-was. therefore, going to be made, delay notwithstanding. In October, accordingly, Bell's solicitors wrote demanding accounts.

Walter, who had heard nothing since July and hoped that the demand had been dropped, was profoundly upset at this new proof of Bell's intransigence. He considered that he had been victimized by him, or by "X," in two ways. First, he would never have supported the Bell-Sterling agreement if he had thought that "X," in whose interest he was giving that support, was likely to use against him the asset of the alleged excessive printing profits which, with The Times itself, "X" had only secured with his support; and secondly, that even had he done so, and believing that litigation would follow, he would, instead of opting for Preference Shares in the new company, have joined the very large section of the proprietors who, together, took £180,000 cash and thus, like them, he would have completely severed his connexion with the newspaper. Neither course being now possible, he determined to fight Bell's claim. The Court directed Walter to render accounts within one month. However, as it was not made clear what the relevant accounts were, another summons later became necessary. Walter then deposed that the purchaser himself possessed the books. The matter was then adjourned. Thus the action and the year 1908 dragged on, without any judgment being given on Item No. 7.

Although the litigation was to continue, "X" did not ignore the importance, on public grounds, of the Walter connexion. He was by no means anxious for anything like a final quarrel with the family. One of the first events of the year 1909 was the appointment of Hubert Walter to Berlin. Upon his application

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XIX.

for the assistantship in that office being accepted, "X" told Bell to send him to St. James's Place for a talk about Germany. When Hubert Walter and "X" met, on January 6, 1909, the conversation became general. Northcliffe repeated the familiar guarantee that, as he had secured The Times in order to maintain it as a great national institution, &c., he regarded the name of Walter as fundamentally necessary to its stability and progress; that all he wanted to do was to keep The Times as it had been, but to secure for it still better foreign news, still better leading articles, better home service, better everything and nothing sensational. So much was familiar. "X" now said that since his connexion with the paper he had been reading the files, had taken the trouble to make notes on the history of the paper and had gone deeply into the period when it first earned its prestige. He recalled the careers and achievements of John Walter II and Thomas Barnes-which that generation had utterly forgotten. The history of the paper as a whole, said "X," had been lost. The name of Delane was well enough known, but the earlier and formative enterprise, which was hardly a memory, was submerged beneath a stream of loyalty to the Walter family as such. It was necessary, "X" said, for the Walters to think of those who had made that name famous in printing and in newspaper enterprise. For a score of years, "X" proceeded, the prestige and revenue secured from the direct journalistic initiative of The Times had been exchanged for pittances from encyclopaedias, books and the Book Club in which there could be no prestige. This became "X's" favourite line of conversation. To the members of the staff he contrived to meet, he invariably recalled the memory of the triumphs of the newspaper's past. Between the editorship of Barnes and that of Buckle-between the age of Walter II and that of Walter IV—some virtue, he said, had gone out of The Times. He wanted to restore that virtue; not merely to recall triumphs but to repeat them. It was his resolve to repair editorial and mechanical weaknesses and to revive for the paper its old traditions of journalistic enterprise and to secure for it the circulation and profit which it would thus deserve. "X" insisted that somebody must be the "John Walter II" of the contemporary period. He added that he well knew the limits of his own strength and, although he would be proud single-handed to renovate The Times, his health being what it was the revival could best be accomplished in association with the descendants of John Walter II. By its power to sustain the disasters of the Parnell verdict, the payment for the Commission's huge costs, the trade competition, the litigation, and lastly the revolution of the sale

to himself, *The Times* proved itself a peculiar institution. All this was clear enough. It was, "X" reflected, its very strength which made difficult the changes he was convinced were necessary.

Strong, experienced, and inventive as he was, Northcliffe was by no means sure of his strength in matching himself alone against the office. There may not have been a John Walter II in Bear Wood, or a Thomas Barnes in Printing House watter II in Bear wood, or a Inomas Barnes in Printing House Square, but "X" knew he would have to go slow. Walter, during the whole of this transitional period, remained Chairman of The Times Publishing Company, Limited, in accordance with the agreement. His health, which had not been good for a year before the sale, was now much worse and at Board meetings his place as a rule was taken by Chirol or Monypenny. Apart from his weak health he naturally did not feel any strong wish to associate himself with any of the Board's activities. In all the circumstances he thought it best to await events and to tolerate delay in the settlement of Bell's action against him. He made no personal contact with "X." The matter might take its course as far as he was concerned. It turned out that an infinite amount of time was yet to be wasted over Item 7. The absence abroad during 1909 of the solicitors on both sides congested the files with letters from a variety of subordinates acknowledging letters complaining that material answers to letters could not be sent until the return of the respective principals. It does not appear that "X" allowed it to be thought that he was in the least interested. What mattered to him was the paper itself. He was infatuated by his new connexion as he had never been before with a newspaper property. During the early months of 1909 he was inspired to write almost every day long essays in appreciation and depreciation of the paper, its accounts, organization and distribution. Letters of three or four or more quarto pages of typewriting were sent to Bell on February 14, 15, 16, pages of typewriting were sent to ben on represent 14, 15, 16, 18, 20. Reply by return was expected—and duly sent. Bell was grateful, &c. At the beginning of March he expressed his view that neither he nor the office needed "persistent urging." Towards the end of March he said that less criticism and more encouragement would have a better effect upon the staff, and produce a better paper. "X's" answer to the last was a wire to Mrs. Moberly Bell at 22 Park Crescent: "If I am worrying Mr. Bell please let me know. I fear he does not understand my rough ways." On the same day he wrote to: "My dear Bell," in which he said emphatically that "I do wish you would take my letters in a more reasonable frame of mind. I am always careful not to give my impression of things I do not understand." It was the first

#### A PROJECTED HISTORY OF THE TIMES

of what turned out to be an infinite number of similar exchanges. But in his first year of control "X" was so fascinated by *The Times* that, at that time, he could think and plan and read and talk of nothing else. And as yet he could communicate only with Bell. On March 20, 1909, he surprised Bell with a new request: "I wish I could find a good history of *The Times*. I do not believe there is one. If that is so, one ought to be written by a very able man—a very good one, full of pictures, caricatures, &c., a work that would take two or three years. My idea is that the volume should be a very handsome one and not on the barest margin of paper. It would constitute a great advertisement of *The Times*."

In the spring of the year a measure of harmony in the Foreign Department was restored. After the incidents of the autumn Bell and Chirol were cooperating to soothe the feelings of Bourchier. Steed usefully intervened in his colleague's behalf and assisted Chirol to procure from Bell the satisfaction he demanded, and the relations between the Vienna Correspondent and P.H.S. themselves improved. But Chirol's health deteriorated. With the approval of "X" Bell suggested a change of scene, and in March Chirol was taken by "X" for a tour in France. But this did not restore his health and within a week or two of his return from Paris he left for another journey to the East.

"I have been going down hill quickly during the last month," he told Steed, and as he had not been in the Far East for some eight years he thought he would go out to talk over matters with the correspondents at Peking and Tokyo. He proposed to see the Vienna Correspondent either on his way to or from Tokyo, and hoped that in the latter case they might travel to London together. "I can assure you that you will find nothing but friendly feeling and a keen appreciation of all that you have done for the paper." When he passed through Vienna, Steed, as he told Bell, was shocked at his appearance. Bell admitted that he had had no strong belief that Chirol's health would be sufficiently restored to enable him to continue the responsibility for the Foreign Department, and that in any case if he did return in a fitter condition he proposed to make him give up night work. He also said that the disorganization of the office resulting from Chirol's run of breakdowns had been mended only in part. He did not make any suggestion to Steed concerning his own position.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Thursfield was suggested as the author, interviewed and set to work on the History of *The Times*. He said it would take him three years. The work seems not to have prospered and none of it has been found available to the present compiler.

The degree to which Chirol's health benefited from the voyage did not induce Bell to revise his opinion that he should discontinue night work. In effect this meant that Braham should continue to take this burden permanently from Chirol's shoulders. It was hardly a good arrangement, but it was all that occurred to him at the time. Bell, by the accumulation of work was himself now so patently worn out that "X" seemed, in the opinion of the office, to be acting with generosity in recommending his having a change by taking a voyage to America. But first there needed to be completed the "Empire Day" issue of The Times, the first of its series of "special numbers" which later included many that were reprinted in book-form. Edward Grigg was in charge of the "Empire Day" issue, which was published in May, 1909. "X" was at Königstein in the Taunus, near Frankfort, resting but finding the time to write to Bell every day. The number was a notable success. It extended to 72 pages of which half were display advertisements. The money for these was welcome to Bell. "X," who alternately urged Bell to save and to spend, was, it turned out, apt to spend what Bell saved and to excuse himself on the ground that expenditure was only possible with economy. The result was, as intended, an increase in "X's" direct power over the office.

A new step was taken on July 29, 1909, when Hubert Walter, Steed and Bourchier were invited to Sutton Place. Office affairs were inevitably the main topic of conversation. It became clear to the visitors that "X" was coming to a definite conclusion of some kind. Though nothing was said, they thought he was meditating a scheme of reorganization with the nomination of successors to some of the higher editorial posts. "X" had not, in fact, come to any conclusions; the visitors were at that date only the witnesses and parties to one of his earliest efforts to make and maintain direct connexion with the leading members of the staff otherwise than through Bell; "X" was merely conducting a preliminary survey of the ground. Twelve months' experience had taught "X" that Bell was "obstinate." Bell, of course, never having had the slightest intention of being "easy" with anybody, at any time, certainly had no mind now to give way to "X" on anything like a major question affecting what he believed to be of the esse or even of the bene esse of The Times. While in his opinion the salvation of The Times depended as much as ever upon "X's" financial power to control The Times, his own moral power to control "X" was no less vital. He felt this personal responsibility very keenly. Not only was the tradition created by the Walters during a century and a quarter now largely in his hands; but the whole of the responsibility for having invited

## "X" BEGINS TO MEET THE STAFF

Northcliffe in place of Pearson was notoriously his. It was as much his bounden duty to the paper, as his personal desire, to guide the man he had brought into the control; in his own words, to "keep him in order." It would in any case have been a difficult task, for "X" was the younger man by nearly twenty years and he had a vastly greater experience of the publishing trade. Bell in 1908 and 1909, as for years previously, had only one basic idea: to maintain The Times by maintaining the editorial staff and himself in their positions. In addition he possessed a number of convictions and habits, all narrowed by the limits of his experience in Printing House Square. As Managing Director, with a contract for five years signed at the age of sixty-one, he had set himself the task of "keeping in order" a chief proprietor of forty-four; one who had secured his uniquely commanding position in journalism against a host of competitors, and entirely by his own ideas and energies, in no more than twenty years after the foundation of Answers, his first venture. Nothing could be more certain than that the attempt by such a man as Bell to "keep in order" such a man as "X" would lead to difficulties. In any case it cannot be doubted that the unremitting pressure as kept up by "X" in 1909 was deliberately intended to tire Bell out. "X" was not alone as Bell was; nor swamped with a thousand legal, managerial and other details. Buckle, too, had his anxieties but they scarcely counted in comparison with Bell's.

"X" could not but take the keenest possible editorial as well as managerial interest in The Times. The ambition of many years to control the paper at last satisfied, his soul, whatever he may have promised himself or others, could not rest content with a policy of tinkering from a distance, but only with a real and effective sense of the close control of The Times as a whole. In the spring of 1908 he had acquired control over The Times, which was to be his "yacht." In the spring of 1909 he was determined that The Times should not acquire control over him. Furthermore, even were the paper paying handsomely soon after his assumption of control-and it was not-"X," as a born journalist, would inevitably be fascinated by the opportunity, the right, and the power to mould it. For such reasons, the guarantees which Bell had struggled to get in March, 1908, and persuaded himself that he had secured, never in fact did more than modify the form and delay the manifestation of "X's" interest; they could in no measure lessen its substance or limit its range. Any doubt on that vital point should have vanished when, on the occasion of Sutton's ultimatum, Bell withdrew all "conditions" and agreed to carry out the "absolute instructions" of "X." He

had hoped at the best that in the actual conditions of work he would find a way to manage the purchaser and at the worst that, with all his other enterprises, it would be long before "X" interfered.

But the delay was fated to be brief. After the purchase Kennedy Jones had become the principal intermediary between "X" and P.H.S. He was a rough but not uncongenial censor of office methods. Buckle liked him for his unashamed matter-of-factness. but found it difficult to forgive "X" for not having made it clear to Bell, before the purchase, that he made it a principle always to work under the financial control of Jones. "We were never told" complained Buckle to Bell when that fact was starkly announced in July, 1909, upon the coming of the first balance-sheet of the company into Jones's crude hands. Buckle, who knew nothing of Sutton's ultimatum, had no alternative but to believe that "X" had broken faith with Bell. The months immediately following the incorporation of the Company, which gave legal form to the "saving" of The Times, was a period in which money had been easy and relations with "X" pleasant. So much has been seen. But the "honeymoon" ended with the first year's balance-sheet. Those accounts revealed, said Kennedy Jones, several items of more immediate and aggregate concern than the few thousand pounds that might be secured from Bell's prosecution of the claim for Item No. 7. The Company's first year of business, in fact, showed a loss. "X's" encouragement to Bell to be liberal had a consequence entirely unexpected—by Bell if not by "X" or by K.J. The result was the first serious collision between the two sides; "X," in fact, came into the open as the opponent of Bell's entire system of direction and was, for the first time, hardly polite in his language regarding one much his senior. Buckle gave Bell all the support he could and wrote a protest to "X." The reply gave both Buckle and Bell the greatest anxiety for the immediate future:

Elmwood, August 10, 1909.

My dear Buckle,—I hasten to reassure you about *The Times*. I thought you would probably gather that I was really trying to get Bell to move. We have done our best by persuasion, but without effect. The battle of the accounts lasted about a year, with the result that we have now exactly the same clear system of accounts as is used in any other business.

I am sure that you realise as well as I do that the old man is one of the most difficult characters with which to deal. He is perfectly straight, and yet most elusive; most amiable and gentle, and, on the other hand, inordinately vain and obstinate; most industrious, yet

#### A NEW ASSISTANT-MANAGER

doing little real work; and, above all things, tactless. He has the faculty of placing others in most difficult positions.

Owing to the battle of the accounts, the result is that it is only now that we know the financial state of *The Times* and the Book Club, whereas we might have known quite easily a year ago.

It might not be wise to show him this letter, but you are quite at liberty to do so, as I have said all these things to him privately, much as I dislike any appearance of hectoring one so much my senior. I have told him that we have found you so alert and keen on reorganisation that his peculiarities are the more outstanding.—N.

Dictated in haste to catch train.

"X's" attempt to place "the old man," Bell, by contrast with Buckle, in an unfavourable light made it impossible for the Editor to keep the letter private. Bell thus responded to it:

August 11, 1909.

My dear Northcliffe,

Buckle has, with your consent, shown me your letter to him.

I am not concerned to answer or call in question your opinion of me except upon two points.

You state that I have prevented the accounts from being rendered to you until now in a form which you could understand.

In reply to that I refer you to Mr. Layton Bennet who says "You have assisted me to the utmost and there has never been the smallest trace of obstruction on your part."

You state that I have done little work. I refer you to Mr. Nicholson who says "I cannot understand how you have found time to do the work you have done."

I am, my dear Northcliffe,
Yours very sincerely,
C. F. MOBERLY BELL.

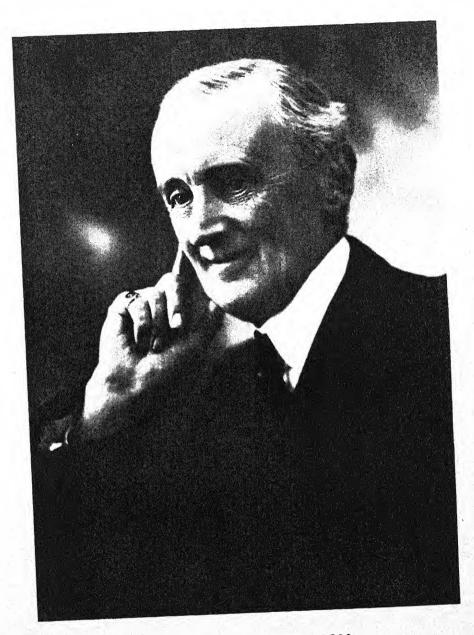
Pressure was relieved because neither side could afford to quarrel, but it was now necessary for Bell to make himself thoroughly unpopular, as foreseen by "X," by economizing. In order to help him in this unpleasant task, an assistant was suggested. A pretext was thus found for the making of an entirely new appointment—Reginald Nicholson, an intimate friend of "X," recently of the *Daily Mirror*. He was a trained commercial and industrial manager, of the education and outlook calculated to ensure him respect in the office. Nicholson had been in the office since April and was appointed assistant-manager on August 17, 1909. Bell's friend Kitchin, an editorial man specializing in economics and banking but little interested in management, who had occupied the office of assistant-manager for twelve uneasy

months, was deposed to make room for the new man. As a first task Nicholson was given the job of effecting savings in the mechanical departments. For the time being, hostilities ceased, for Nicholson was a man of sympathy and understanding.

After the battle Bell was left completely exhausted. "X" recommended him to take a holiday "for once in your life." He revived his suggestion, made earlier in the year, of Bell's having a break from office worry by taking a trip to America. In fact Bell was worn out more by "X's" persistence than by the accumulation of work. But it now turned out that "X" himself was going to Newfoundland and he prevailed upon Bell to accompany him. "X" thus made an opportunity to get Bell out of the office for the three months that Nicholson needed to familiarize himself with the place, the natives, and their customs. Nicholson's personal and professional success obviously marked him out as Bell's successor. As for the immediate future, while it was recognized that "X" had a habit of changing his mind, the appointment was accepted and, as events proved, rightly interpreted as a sign that "X" himself intended to rule through the medium of a trained modern "executive"; not, as had been thought and hoped by Bell, through a delegate given a wide range of independence after a period of service in which he would have learnt to sympathize with the old customs of an old office. In truth "X" was henceforth to be master of his own paper; he was going to stand no more "obstinacy" from Bell. He was to be "X" no longer; he was to be Northcliffe; to be the "Chief."

Meanwhile, Bell was doing his best to enjoy his forced vacation. In his absence, Bell was kept in touch by letters from Chirol and others. The reorganization of the Home News Department by Pryor<sup>1</sup> was now progressing favourably. Buckle, as was foreseen, gave no more support to the innovators than to make an offer to consider their recommendations. Richmond and Freeman, however, were among the supporters of reform. Chirol found himself lunching with K.J. to discuss the highly unfamiliar topics; and he participated indirectly in the discussions with Buckle concerning the Finance Bill. Grigg, with Chirol at his back, was doing his best to get Buckle to define the policy of the paper. The office as a whole, Chirol reported, thought Buckle was content to "wobble." The reports duly reached Bell in New York. If the American trip was a holiday for Northcliffe, it was an experience for his companion. Bell was entertained morning, noon and night to questions, slighting references, criticisms and downright abuse of Printing House Square, its men and methods.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A capable, practical journalist, no longer living, to whom Northcliffe had entrusted the task of wandering about *The Times* office and suggesting improvements.



REGINALD NICHOLSON

MANAGER OF THE TIMES. 1911-1915

From a photograph

"I have a feeling" he wrote, "that I want more rest now than I did when I started":

I have no doubt that I shall be all the better for it in the end. X has every day some new project that must be written or telegraphed about and the next day it is something else. An hour ago he said to me "Now I am going to have three days of absolute peace, nothing to read, no one to abuse. I'm going to my batteries." Ten minutes ago he hammered at my door "Just look at this," showing me a local paper with some figures about immigration. "We're not taking it seriously enough. Wire to Cook, write to Buckle, leave letters for Grigg. Try to get hold of Amery."

From the tone of this report it is obvious that "X's" experiment of taking the Managing Director for a ride, usually successful in bringing highly placed members of the Daily Mail staff to heel, had failed. On the ship Bell had plenty to say for himself, and still more for his colleagues. The Times was not the Daily Mail or the Weekly Dispatch and, whether or not "X" knew it, the public knew the difference. But Bell, fighting as well and as "obstinately" (to use "X's" word) as he did, could not now doubt that there was extreme danger ahead.

There was. "X," without in the least wishing to be responsible for details, had resented his exclusion from the inner councils of the paper. The Times after a year remained an enigma, which neither Bell nor Buckle had any intention of helping him solve. On the other hand, "X" did not yet see his way to overcoming the public and private criticism from Court and political quarters that would be certain to follow any serious quarrel with its united management and staff. He knew that the small extent to which he had gained, either the confidence of the influential public or that of any section of the staff, would not enable him successfully to direct important changes and appointments. It was necessary to secure both before he could interfere successfully with the policy expressed in leading articles. Any serious changes in the editorial staff must, for the present, be held back. But Bell would not be spared.

In October, Chirol was able to report to Steed that, so far as he had seen, no direct interference with the politics of the paper had been attempted. He even expressed a doubt whether, if made, it would be successful. It is tolerably certain, however, that Chirol's hasty telegram to Bourchier¹ was the result of his desire to propitiate the new tendencies he observed to be increasingly pressed upon the news departments in the office. The sensitive Chirol was not anxious to meet trouble half way;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See p. 653, supra.

he knew that Bell, his friend, whom he had helped to bring about the Bell-Sterling agreement, was being criticized by "X" on account of an alleged stubborn preference for the old methods. Now that there had been introduced into the Home Department a new method of handling news, which appeared to Chirol to be sound and commendable, he was not disinclined to meet "X's" wishes in that direction. Chirol was not interested in home politics or news, and he thought it possible that circumspection would prevent interference with his own department. To this extent Chirol was on the side of "X." Bell, too, despite the friction and the pressure, the motives for which he had not fully plumbed, remained on the side of the "X" who had insisted on his desire to make The Times more like The Times; on the side of that "X" who, a few months earlier in the year, had assured Lord Esher and Buckle that he wanted to bequeath it to the "British Museum."

At present, figures were figures. The paper must be made to pay. Nicholson was at work in the Mechanical Department. For the execution of an economy drive in the Foreign Department Ralph Walter was appointed and arrived in September, 1909, while Bell was in America with "X." Kennedy Jones's figures showed that the weekly expenses of the Editorial Department were £2,770 and that they had to be cut by £250. Ralph Walter made a saving on cable expenses and in other directions which in the aggregate reached a substantial figure. The achievement was cordially recognized by Kennedy Jones, who had appointed him. The arrangement, however, was not well regarded by the older men. Ralph's saving was welcome enough to Jones; his personality aroused suspicion in Chirol, who took Bell's contemporary view of the family. In the consequent friction with Bell, Ralph Walter stood his ground well but he was left without support, as economy-drivers generally are. Moreover, although he had travelled much, had seen a good deal of life outside the office, and knew a good piece of work when he saw it, he lacked what the office respected most of all: a sense of proportion. He gave as much time to correspondence relating to the installation of new clips designed to prevent papers falling off a reading stand in one of the rooms as to the making out of new and really useful daily and weekly cost sheets. He provided and numbered coat pegs where none had been before and introduced the first typewriter into the department. These obvious changes were noted by colleagues, but not necessarily as improvements; less obvious, and certainly not regarded by them as a triumph, was the economy amounting to £15,000 which Ralph Walter effected in one year. As a new appointment he was suspect in any case; as

#### RALPH WALTER'S ECONOMY DRIVE

a Walter his passage could not have been easy, but it remains that his failure was due to purely personal characteristics. Lack of generosity was not unknown in the transitional period through which the office was passing.

The reorganization of other departments proceeded with comparative ease. On September 2 the Board, lacking Bell who was, it has been seen, absent in America, accepted the scheme of Nicholson and Pryor for the reorganization of routine. Among the new provisions was a daily "conference" between the heads of the editorial departments to be held between four and five, such as had been held in Carmelite House for many years. After much discussion it was decided that as, in all possibility, Buckle would discover difficulties in being present, he should not be asked to attend; but that Capper or Richmond should afterwards attend upon the Editor and submit to him the scheme for the following day's paper. It turned out that the departments, and not only Buckle, saw difficulties in the scheme for a daily "conference." None was held until "X" put his foot down in the late spring of 1910. The outer office, ignorant of the anxieties through which Walter, Bell, Buckle, and others had passed during recent years, naturally showed no enthusiasm for new ideas, new methods, or new men. It was quickly realized, however, that resistance meant suicide. The absence of Hooper and Jackson from the advertising side, to mention only one department, had removed a source of inspiration and enterprise, though it was rapidly settling down under the energetic hand of Murray Allison. Nicholson, the first new managerial appointment from outside, became universally popular. Once Bell had got over the squeezing out of Kitchin, he greatly liked him. Buckle, who came less into contact with him, equally found him The appointment proved that the new Chief Proprietor had an eye for the sort of man who could manage P.H.S., and, to an extent, the "Chief" himself. What part, if any, he would take in the breaking of Bell the future would show.

"X," accustomed as he was to the efficient professional managers of his own—and other people's—newspaper properties, had from the first looked with a highly critical eye upon Bell's methods. They were more than "old"; they were "old-fashioned." The office, at that time, was somewhat antiquated. "X" objected to letters to the Managing Director of *The Times* not being answered; or, when they were, that copies were sometimes not made and in consequence their contents forgotten. Arrangements, it was said, were occasionally made by a department for a specialist correspondent from a distance to cover an

event in complete ignorance of the fact that another department had already instructed a man on the spot to do so. It was more serious that new interests—for example, aviation—were either neglected or indifferently handled. Instances of such shortcomings were brought to the notice of Kennedy Jones; the step of appointing him and Nicholson was justifying itself. Other instances noted while Bell had been away on the Atlantic were duly reported. To Nicholson, as to one unwilling to take a certain course, he wrote on the return journey from America while still in company with Bell:

I have reasons for urging that Bell be daily reminded that I regard him as a stirrer up of trouble with those members of Staff & Board who show any disaffection towards those who are doing their best to put things right. Optimistic statements & figures are always bad for all concerned, especially *The Times* folk & K.J.

During the closing months of 1909 Northcliffe multiplied criticisms of *The Times* and repeated his admonitions to Nicholson. "You are too easy with Bell. He only understands the cokehammer." In self-defence Bell pointed to the improvements that had already been made and bade critics like himself and Kennedy Jones believe that progress was being made. Buckle repeated to Jones the same assurance, saying that for himself he faced the future with confidence. It was the statement of an editor whose business it was to edit. He was not responsible for a yearly balance sheet but for a daily paper. *The Times*, he told Jones, was not as good as he could make it if the new control expressed more confidence in the staff. Buckle told Jones that the future was hopeful. The Editor received a totally unexpected answer direct from Northcliffe:

9 December, 1909

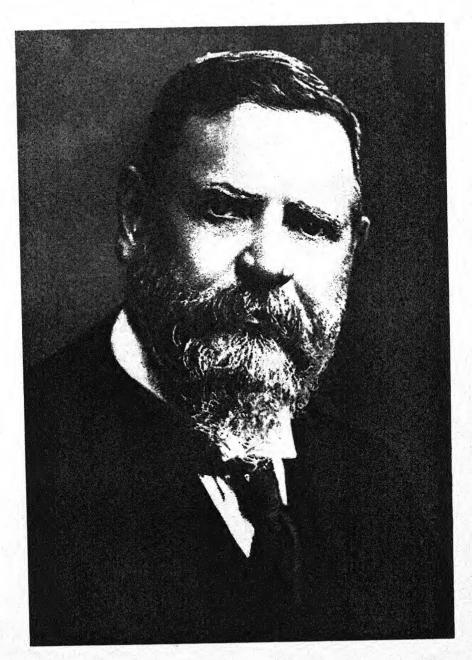
My dear Buckle,

I am very loth to trouble you, but whoever endeavours to lull you into a false sense of security by telling you that *The Times* outlook, without drastic reform, is hopeful, is a false friend of the Paper.

The advertisements depend upon one man whose contract expires at Christmas, and, at a time when the circulation of other papers is increasing, that of *The Times* is stagnant and will be stagnant until money is saved on expenses that can be spent on the circulation of the journal.

It is a thousand pities that the efforts of such men as Jones, Nicholson and Pryor should be nullified by the optimism that brought *The Times* on the rocks, and I feel strongly that the staff should be made acquainted with the real facts.

Jones told us yesterday that you had some impression that we desired to reduce your influence in Printing House Square. That is far from being the case, but I am sorry you are among the optimists.



GEORGE EARLE BUCKLE

EDITOR OF THE TIMES, 1884-1912

From a photograph

#### BUCKLE DEFENDS HIS OPTIMISM

So far as Bell is concerned, I very greatly resent his action. My own position seems never to be considered at *The Times* office. On the strength of my record, Jones, my brother Harold and Sir John Ellerman have invested, as you know, large sums in the newspaper, and their reward is neither *kudos* nor cash—in Mr. Jones's case it is immensely hard work.

I am at present sandwiched between the other proprietors on the one hand, who naturally urge me to drastic action, and, on the other hand, the obstinate incapacity and the ignorance of Bell, who apparently does not look forward, in this matter, more than three or four months at the most at any time. Personally, I gave up the idea of ever influencing Bell when I was abroad. I have not the strength, nor the time, nor the inclination for the task of convincing such a man against his will.

There is now no immediate need for worry until after Christmas, because at this time of year nothing can be done with any newspaper. The best thing for you is a very complete rest to prepare you for the double task of getting ready for the political conflict and the narrow state of affairs at home.

You are quite at liberty to show this to Bell or any of the other directors. But it is lamentable to have to say that every communication we send has to be put into the hands of those who, I think most ungratefully, resent our efforts to save the paper. In any case I trust that you will preserve this letter so that I may be relieved in future from blame.

# Yours very sincerely Northcliffe

Buckle, who had so frequently in the past protested against Bell's invasion of the editorial province, was not the man to desert his colleague now that he was unfairly attacked. Buckle had everything to gain, for himself, by not sending this answer:

15 December 1909

My dear Northcliffe,

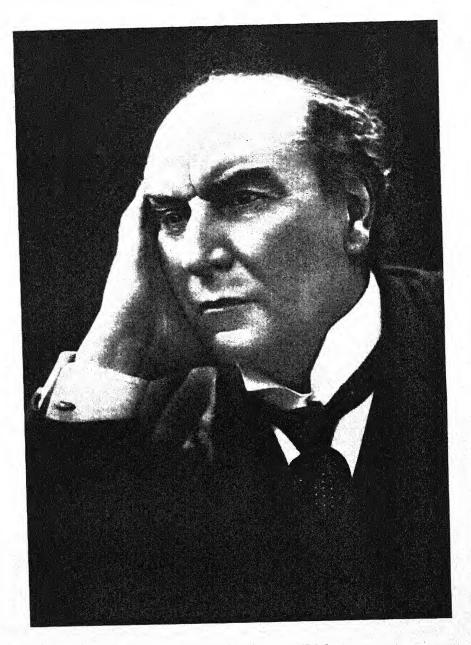
No doubt I am by temperament an optimist; otherwise I should hardly preserve, as I hope I do, some trace of youthfulness after 26 years' editorship of *The Times*. But, in what I wrote to you about the improvement in the advertisements, circulation and expenses compared with last year, I based myself solely on facts, presented to the Board weekly by your own manager, Nicholson, and admitted in conversation with me the other night by Kennedy Jones. I know we have still an uphill fight before us, in part owing to the extra expenditure incurred on your representations last year. But it does not seem to me to be common sense to ignore the actual improvement because there is still a long way to go. If Allison's contract expires at Christmas, can it not be renewed?

I assure you that I, at any rate, do not fail to consider your position in relation to your fellow-proprietors; and both Bell and I have insisted on sharing to some extent the sacrifices which are entailed upon you all. But, so long as the first preference dividend is paid, the proprietors do get some, though I admit (from a capitalist's point of view) an inadequate, return for the money invested; and I remember you told me that you did not expect a profit for five years.

I do not know to whom you refer as nullifying the efforts of Jones, Nicholson and Pryor; I am endeavouring to help them. Nor do I understand what you mean by saying that it is lamentable that every communication you send has to be put into the hands of those who ungratefully resent your efforts to save the Paper. I have shown your letters to no one but those principally responsible for working *The Times*, to Bell and Chirol frequently, to Capper occasionally, and now and then to Richmond. Probably, in both cases, you are referring mainly to Bell; if you mean more, please tell me.

For your kind reference to me, I thank you, and I am quite sure that you are sincere in what you say. But what is the present position, in relation to you and Jones, of the three directors who actually carry on the work of the Paper? You have absolutely lost confidence, and for half a year have not hesitated to say so in decided language, in the Managing Director, the pivot on whom turned the whole negotiation by which you acquired your commanding interest in The Times. In these circumstances nothing but duty to the Paper, to which he is wholly devoted, can keep him at his post. Your entire disbelief in him is in itself a serious matter for the Board, and especially for Chirol and me, his friends, who realize all that he has done for the Paper. He is working very hard, amid great difficulties, to reduce the cost of the Imperial and Foreign Department, and his reward is to be blamed because the reduction does not proceed more rapidly. As it is, that reduction is likely to cost The Times its best Foreign Correspondent, Saunders, who resents any interference with the conditions under which he undertook the work at Paris, and says that he will go if his wishes are not complied with. It will do The Times serious harm to lose its best Foreign Correspondent (who would probably be snapped up on his own terms by the D.T. or the M.P.) because he disapproves of economies that are pressed on him. It would hurt its reputation still more if its Foreign Director resigned for similar reasons.

As for myself I will only say at present that one of the leading points in the speech I made to my colleagues in February—a speech of which you were good enough to express high approval—was that, in spite of changes in the proprietary, the editorial staff remained in its integrity. It will be a serious matter for me if I am pressed, as there are some indications that I may be, to make myself the instrument for getting rid of colleagues, to the security of whose tenure I have pledged myself.



C. F. MOBERLY BELL From a photograph taken in 1910

#### BELL SHAVES HIS MOUSTACHE

I have delayed answering your letter, partly owing to holiday laziness, and partly in order that I might carefully consider the terms in which I should place before you the views which I, and, I believe, my fellow directors, hold. I will, according to your wish, preserve your letter, along with others couched in very different terms; perhaps it would be well if you were to keep this letter of mine.

I may add that this is written without any consultation with either Bell or Chirol, to neither of whom have I yet shown your letter.

Yours,

G. E. B.

It was a complete answer. Northcliffe's only reply to Buckle was that he had to apply the spur to Bell. Thus matters stood in the Editorial Department at the end of 1909. The auspices for 1910 were not happy, for Northcliffe pressed Nicholson over and over again "to get it into his head that there was to be one master in P.H.S." Bell, preparing to face the storms of the New Year with a firm countenance, shaved his moustache. To the office the action seemed full of significance. Bell laughed off the comments of colleagues by saying that too long had his upper lip witnessed to Mr. Gillette's poor advertising methods. But the change deepened the anxiety of the whole house. It was feared, for a time, that Buckle might sacrifice the handsomest beard that Printing House Square had boasted since the days of Dallas.

Bell, once he realized that he was dealing now with North-cliffe, the "Chief," had less difficulty than others in accepting the situation. After all, he reasoned, his experience and that of the experts, Jones, Nicholson, and Pryor, whom Northcliffe sent in, was all of great value. Moreover, years before, it had been agreed between Bell and Hooper that *The Times* urgently needed reform. The policy of modernization was to be welcomed; it was only the manner of carrying out the policy that was upsetting. The constant telegraphing and telephoning, now that that instrument of torture had been put in, naturally got on the nerves of men like Buckle and Chirol. In their capacity as Directors of The Times Publishing Company, Limited, they would never realize, as Bell was in process of doing, that that Board was never intended by "X," Northcliffe or the "Chief" to be more than a device for the quietening of gossips like Lord Esher.

Early in 1910 several minor incidents occurred which upset the directors. They were tactfully smoothed out by Bell. But there followed in the third week of January a sudden change in the editorship of the Weekly Edition which prompted Chirol, as a Director of the Company, to protest to Bell that the matter should first of all have been discussed by the Board. Bell returned a "make the best of it" reply which testified to the strength of his will to believe that Northcliffe genuinely intended to abide by the letter of the undertakings Bell considered he had been given in March, 1908. He pointed out to Chirol that it had never been part of the bargain that Northcliffe should have no power at all. In essence the undertaking was political not financial:

My dear Chirol,

I reply to your letter and memorandum by a letter which I mark private but which you are of course at liberty to show to any member of the Board.

Let me remind you of the position two years ago when we accepted the help of Lord Northcliffe. *The Times* was threatened with the carrying out of a contract which left the exclusive political and financial control in the hands of a man who had made no secret of his intention of getting rid of almost the entire staff and substituting that of the *Standard* with which we were to be amalgamated.<sup>1</sup>

In these circumstances I saw Lord Northcliffe. He expressed his intention in any case of buying the paper if he could, preferably with our assistance, if not without it. I asked him what he intended to do with it—his reply was (I give the purport, not the exact words).— "I want to make it worth 3d. I think the printing is bad and the make-up abominable. Your law reports and Parliamentary reports are good, but they ought to be fuller. Your City news can be greatly improved. Your foreign correspondents are excellent, but you do not give enough space to foreign news-in fact I want to improve every department of the paper, but as to the policy of the paper, the political tone of the paper, I do not want to interfere at all—that is a matter for the Editor." With regard to the staff he said: "I do not know any of them, but I do not want to get rid of anyone who does his work well—I want as little change as possible—the same Editor, the same Foreign Editor, the same Manager, the same Solicitor, and so far as possible the same staff."

On the strength of those engagements I agreed to give what help I could and to secure so far as I could that of the others. I received it from everyone, from none more than from you, but how did we all regard it?

Personally I had seen Lord Northcliffe only twice before. I was certainly not prejudiced in his favour, but his promises convinced me at least that it was a better alternative than that from which we were trying to escape.

What was your attitude? You said "I should take it (the money) if it was from the Devil himself!"

Buckle thought it "only a degree better than Pearson."

Monypenny had grave doubts if he could join.

<sup>1</sup> Hardly an accurate account of the Pearson agreement. See Chapter XVI, supra.

#### A DEFINITION OF INDEPENDENCE

I only recall these facts to remind you that we none of us expected to find a bed of roses. We were escaping from a bed of thorns and took what we could get as a substitute. I do not think that any of us at that time expected that we should have as little interference as we got during the first twelve months. I certainly did not, and I think that the charm of his manner and the great latitude which we were given at the first has rather blinded us to the danger we avoided and the difficulties of a situation from all the inconveniences of which we could not expect wholly to escape.

The main question is—has he or has he not departed from the letter and the spirit of his agreement? I do not think that he has. I think that on the whole we might have expected much more interference. It would not, I think, have been contrary to his engagements if he had said—"I am going to send you a man to improve your law reports or your parliamentary reports "—and I do not think it is against his engagements when he says "I am sending you a man to improve your Weekly Edition."

Certainly if he had said on the first occasion that I met him that he proposed such a course it would not have affected my attitude.

The one thing I attached importance to was that there should be no interference with the political line of the paper—that the paper should be *independent* of his opinions and provided that was secured I did not care what happened to the reporting or even the sub-editing.

To the change itself in the editing of the Weekly Edition I therefore do not see that we have any right to object. The manner in which that change has been made is certainly open to objection, but in the first place my own ignorance of the fact that there was any immediate desire for the change and my own indifference to it caused me inadvertently to delay notifying it until I had known it for ten days and so made the *manner* appear worse than it was. Lord Northcliffe's state of health and peculiar temperament should also, I think, be made allowance for and above all I do not think that a question of *manner* should be treated by us too seriously.

To sum up—Two years ago we were in a desperate position and we clutched at a means of escape for the sake of preserving the independence of *The Times*. We have secured it for two years and I think we should all be willing to make sacrifices in order to maintain it still. If we divide among ourselves that independence will certainly disappear—so long as we hold together we can maintain it until we are all ejected!

The time may come when we shall have to make a united stand against an attack on the independent political attitude of the paper, but I do not think it has come yet nor do I see personally any signs of it. Let us be very careful to choose our ground before we risk what must mean the loss of what we fought for.

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#### REFORM IN THE OFFICE

For these reasons which I have written very hurriedly I do not think it advisable to take the course suggested in your last paragraph. I would suggest that your perfectly proper protest to your colleagues should be regarded as confidential and I think the Board will be in all the stronger position to oppose any attack on the independence of the paper should such be made.

Yours ever,

C. F. MOBERLY BELL

The distinction here drawn between independence in political matters and independence in financial or journalistic methods was accepted, though with reservations. Seeing that "X" had developed into Northcliffe, Bell was laying greater stress upon proprietorial powers to which his control entitled him. It was a statement of the facts, as he now recognized them to be; even so, it would not have been accepted by Sutton on that Sunday morning when he appeared at Park Crescent, and Bell acknowledged in writing that he understood that, as Managing Director, he was to act upon Northcliffe's "absolute instructions." The subject of "interference" was officially dropped by the Board but unofficial measures to prevent a recurrence were agreed upon.

The "united front" so strongly desired by Bell for the protection of the "independence" of *The Times* from Northcliffe's control of its policy was, with some effort, maintained during the ensuing international complications. The period of calm after the Bosnian annexation was fated to be only of short duration.

# XXII

# THE EUROPEAN EQUILIBRIUM, 1909-1912

ROFOUND as was the shock given to the whole European system by the Bosnian annexation, its diplomatic consequences were neither obvious nor immediate. During the months which intervened between the annexation in the autumn of 1908 and the New Year, the office saw the necessity of minimizing the rebuff to Russia and thus helping to save Isvolsky from the fate of Delcassé. Above all, The Times was determined to say and admit nothing that could further weaken British-French-Russian understanding. There was, indeed, not a little nervousness regarding the outlook. In all quarters it was now fully appreciated that the effect of the pressure which the Germans alone had been able to exert against France three years earlier had now been dramatically surpassed by the weight which the German and Austrian powers combined brought to bear against Russia. The strain was, in fact, so acute that it could not be taken for granted that the Triple Entente would survive. And, looking into the immediate future, it appeared certain that, if the entente did not hold together Britain would be isolated and would soon find herself face to face with a Continental bloc dominated by Germany and Austria, a combination more powerful than that which had just secured not merely a reversal of Russia's policy, but her humiliation. Times, therefore, felt that the necessity of repairing the entente was absolute. There was no other choice, it was believed. The annexation imposed upon France and Russia, as well as upon Britain, one supreme lesson. The entente must survive, it must be strengthened, and it must become the vigorous instrument of an agreed policy. The mind of The Times was clear and resolute.

But across the Channel it was otherwise. There the annexation caused doubt, hesitation, and dissension. The only point of agreement between the French parties lay in the natural tendency to seek a means to limit, as closely as possible, all occasions of friction between France and Germany. A recent scrimmage

at Casablanca, which Germany had chosen to elevate to the dignity of an international controversy of the first magnitude, gave additional point to the demands of those French statesmen who had urged that, as Germany and France would be obliged to support each other in the East, the two countries should have the courage to come to terms over Morocco. They held it to be desirable to establish an understanding that would, for both sides, efface the memory of Algeciras. Such an idea appeared to The Times as hardly likely to yield satisfaction unless German policy had in the interval undergone a change-which was far from evident. Also, while the Triple Entente might not be as strong as was to be wished, one-sided concessions to Germany would not improve its position. Moreover, in France, as the office already noticed, there were signs of a readiness in certain quarters to consider an understanding with Germany, regardless of its consequences. In all the circumstances, the prospect was not alluring for Britain or for Russia. It appeared even less so to the office when, at the moment Germany was holding herself in readiness to assist Austria to the uttermost and, if necessary, to reduce Russia, she had chosen to make a conciliatory move towards France.

Early in January, 1909, The Times learnt that conversations were taking place between France and Germany over Morocco. It was exactly the time when the Vienna Press was violently attacking Britain.1 Harris, duly instructed, saw the French Minister at Tangier on January 11. The Minister admitted an improvement in relations, a statement later confirmed by the German Minister.<sup>2</sup> Harris learnt that Rosen had hopes of still better relations between the German and French legations and, further, noted his remark to the effect that the international group of concessionnaires known as the Union des Mines (in which Harris himself had an interest) might render great services to both countries. A genuine move of pacification seemed to be in view and Rosen's admission to Harris that he favoured the claims of two engineers belonging to the firm of Mannesmann, who were shortly leaving for Fez (the capital of the Shereefian Empire) in the hope of securing mining concessions, did not arouse his concern.3

Morocco was a country in which *The Times* in the early part of 1909 took little more than a passing interest, since its future could not be considered apart from the general state of Anglo-

<sup>1</sup> See above for Steed's report, Chapter XX.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lister to Grey, January 11, 1909. (G. and T. VII, 146.)

<sup>3</sup> Lister to Grey, January 15, 1909. (op. cit. 147.)

#### A CLEFT IN THE ENTENTE

French relations. As the year proceeded the office became increasingly anxious. The Paris Correspondent revealed the existence in certain quarters of a desire to maximize rather than minimize dissension. At the beginning of February Clemenceau "in a state of nervous irritation" complained to Saunders that the French and British bankers were quarrelling over Ottoman finances. Sir Ernest Cassel was blamed by the French interests for not inviting their participation in the Ottoman bank. Britain, it was alleged, was using her influence selfishly with the Young Turks. "The English," Clemenceau complained, "want to get everything in Turkey for themselves." Saunders's answer was that he imagined that all that the British Government wanted was a strong Turkey. Clemenceau received the statement with coldness; as also Saunders's supplementary observation that the similarity of British and French interests left both Powers in favour of a strong Turkey. When the correspondent professed his ignorance regarding the financial questions the Minister-President dispatched him to M. Pichon with grave words: "There is a cleft in the entente," said Clemenceau, "and care must be taken that it does not widen." But widen it did.

In a talk with Mr. Carnegie of the British Embassy, Saunders expressed the fear that France and Germany might come to an agreement to the detriment of British interests in Turkey. French foreign policy, Saunders added, seemed to be directed at the moment by the single motive of pecuniary gain. French jealousy of Britain's financial power and Near Eastern policy might well have the most awkward results. In any case Britain was not being given the credit that was her due. Chirol, who had visited Constantinople in the previous year, assured Saunders that it was only the influence of the British Embassy that restrained the Young Turks from embarking upon a policy full of danger to France and to peace. "England rendered, on this occasion, a most important service to the cause of European peace, and though M. Clemenceau may not realize it, for it is a point upon which the reports of the French Embassy at Constantinople have doubtless not conveyed much information to him, it is none the less a fact."1 Chirol also confessed to a feeling that there was a disposition in Paris to listen to those whose interest it was to place an evil construction upon everything Britain had done, or left undone. On February 10, 1909. The Times announced, simultaneously, the arrival of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chirol to Saunders, February 2, 1908; Bertie to Grey, February 1, 1909. (G. and T. VII, No. 148.) The opinion of Mr. Langley, Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, was that "Mr. Saunders has put his finger on the weak spot in French foreign policy." (Minute to Carnegie's report, G. and T. VII, p. 134.)

King and royal party in Berlin and the signature there of a new Franco-German accord regarding Morocco. The coincidence, in the expressed opinion of P.H.S., was "happy" and the hope was entertained that this public manifestation on Germany's part was of a return to a policy of moderation. It was "known" that Grey had been kept informed of the negotiations, and England had helped and not hindered the removal of obstacles to Franco-German amity.

British effort to improve the situation had been apparent since January, when the King's determination to repay in February the visit of the Kaiser in the previous autumn, was announced. The Times, consequently, laid emphasis upon its desire that the presence of His Majesty and of the Queen in Berlin, at a time when German opinion appeared to be curiously nervous as to the supposed political designs and machinations of this country, might tend to allay suspicions and apprehensions. (January 9, 1909.) That such a hope should be realized was the more important since "there is no use in affecting to disguise the truth that for a long time past the feelings of Germany and England have not been so friendly as we could desire them to be." The same leading article proceeded to note how in a recent number of the Deutsche Revue, no less a person than General von Schlieffen had represented his country as being "hemmed in." He proceeded to say that France's desire to recover Alsace and Lorraine made her Germany's irreconcilable enemy, that Britain had joined her out of jealousy of German industry and German commerce, while the Slav dislike of the Teuton and Russia's need for money had next thrown her into the arms of England. Since the Kaiser had given his patronage to the General's article, The Times was glad to reproduce a report that the Emperor had approved only its technical portion. The political conclusions, in the view of the paper, were "lurid imaginings." The Powers had an undoubted right to form alliances and understandings among themselves. "When they had done so, they were able to speak to Germany as equals. They had no desire, and they have no desire, to isolate her. They are quite determined that she shall no longer isolate any one of them. There was no need for Germany to be alarmed. Let her accept frankly her place as a member of the European commonwealth, neither more nor less privileged than her neighbours." The Powers would heartily welcome Germany as one of themselves. But, The Times concluded, "they resent and will oppose pretensions to hegemony or to predominance from whatsoever quarter these may come, for upon that opposition depends the liberty of Europe."

#### AN APPRECIATION OF HOLSTEIN

The paper could well afford such a positive tone in January and February, when Germany's old policy of endeavouring at all times to claim treatment corresponding to her size and numerical importance, in effect as the dominant Power on the Continent, had been qualified by a new recognition of the value of neutrality in international relations and that "reversion" to a "wise and moderate policy" which the Morocco agreement proclaimed. (February 9, 1909.) In the opinion of the paper, such a development in policy, which required deeds as well as words if it was to be convincing, was bound to be slow; national policies cannot be altered in a day. "The rapprochement between ourselves and Germany, depending as it does upon the rapprochement between Germany and France, will be all the more enduring if we do not hope too much from it at once." (February 13, 1909.) The Times, however, was optimistic enough then to count upon a relaxation of the tension between Russia and Austria, and the provision of some measure of local autonomy for Bosnia-Herzegovina; also, it warned Austria not to subject Serbia to such pressure as to compel Russia to intervene. There was no inclination in Britain or France to support Serbian demands and it was believed at this time of writing that Germany had no inclination to support Austria.1

Such was the hopeful attitude regarding the situation as a whole that underwent in March the shock and strain of Germany's effective intervention in favour of Austria. Talk by Britain or France or Russia of rapprochement with Germany then became utterly inappropriate. Not, indeed, that The Times abandoned hope. When, on May 9, the Berlin Correspondent sent news of Holstein's death, the paper published an obituary (by Chirol and Saunders) of some 4,000 words, and it took the opportunity to publish a leading article (by Flanagan), which commented upon the man himself and the policy for which he stood. Holstein's reputation had stood high indeed; it could not survive Algeciras, the Anglo-French entente and the Anglo-Russian understanding, all of which he had set himself to prevent; but the circumstances of his departure from the Wilhelmstrasse were no credit to German official arrangements; for too long he had been the target for unmeasured attack in a section of the German Press and The Times, with whom Holstein had fought many a hard battle, "drew attention to the unfairness of these methods. It is known that he appreciated this protest, and somewhat bitterly and unfairly observed that it could only have happened in England." The paper concluded with one more expression of the hope, even

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XX, supra.

after Bosnia, that Holstein's successors would see the wisdom of pursuing a moderate policy.

To all appearances Britain's prospect of being able to avoid compulsory isolation was not improving. Her position as a World Power in both hemispheres was dependent upon the security of her Eastern possessions and the continuance of its guarantee: the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. This had been Chamberlain's view in 1900. But this Alliance, to be an alliance, must not be allowed to become one-sided or to be made the instrument of a policy that had not been agreed. Chirol, who visited Peking in July, 1909, returned with his confidence in Japanese policy somewhat diminished and, therefore, with misgivings about Britain's position as a whole. He had for so long admired the Japanese, having been one of those who had worked for the Alliance of 1902, that he had regarded its subsequent renewals as a mere matter of course. And in view of the combination of continuing Chinese weakness and Russian pressure on China and on the Indian frontiers, the Alliance was not now less important. On the contrary, since Britain was now faced with the new and increasing menace of the German Navy in home waters. it was vital. This was clear to others also, and for their part Chirol's Japanese friends were showing an increasing tendency towards independence. Chirol had noticed this in July. He was greatly depressed three months later by the Japanese-American controversy over railway competition. On September 7, 1909, Chirol wrote to Count Komura at Tokyo that it was "believed that for some time past there has been an agreement between Straight, the new American financial delegate at Peking, and the Chinese, that American support, both financial and diplomatic, would be forthcoming for the construction of that line if China will concede it to an American group." He had persuaded himself that one of the justifications of the original alliance, and of its renewals, was that Britain would thus be enabled, in certain circumstances, to exert a restraining influence upon Japan. Chirol felt bound to tell Komura that in the event of America giving her financial and diplomatic support to the Chinese railway project he failed to see "what steps Japan can take without involving herself in a serious conflict with American interests. Nor do I see how the British Government could support Japan." Chirol proceeded:

I am convinced that it would be a good stroke of policy to enlist British interests on your side. The Russian demand for participation in Chinese railway loans, which will I believe be supported by the French, who are very sick at having been manoeuvred into cooperation with Germany, introduces a new element of complication, as I feel

#### CHIROL CRITICISES JAPANESE POLICY

pretty sure that the Russians and Americans propose to pull together in Manchuria. Also another factor which deserves consideration is the probability of British capital taking a hand in the development of Northern Manchuria under Russian auspices. I do not for a moment believe that the Russians want to create difficulties for Japan, but they can hardly be expected to abstain from action which might not coincide with British interests.

The dispositions of our Government are excellent, but unfortunately I am afraid there is no one at the Foreign Office who thoroughly understands these questions. Certainly with regard to the Chinese railway loan British policy appears to me to have been singularly ill-informed and misdirected. This, of course, is in the strictest confidence.1

Six weeks later, Chirol gave Count Komura his opinion that American policy in the East was following a set course. "Mr. Taft is clearly determined to play a strong hand in China, and in the matter of railway extension in Manchuria he had," Chirol added, "a case which, on the terms of the Portsmouth Treaty, it is difficult to meet. I think our Government will do what they can by means of friendly conversations in Washington, and Sir Edward Grey quite realizes the legitimate interests may reasonably expect a practicable recognition." Chirol, to emphasize his disapproval of Japanese action proceeded to say, in so many words: "I cannot help regretting that the Japanese Government were not able to come to some direct understanding with China in this question." The matter assumed an anxious aspect: "now that the Chinese know they may rely upon American support, they will be much less easy to deal with."2

That the Japanese would seize the opportunity presented by British embarrassment in the West themselves to steer a more independent course in the East was not a hypothesis that Chirol would gladly entertain. He found it difficult to rid himself of an uneasy feeling regarding the consequences of a worsening of Japanese relations with the United States, but felt himself entitled to rely upon the sagacity of his Japanese friends to prevent the situation from deteriorating to a point that might reasonably be considered dangerous. The office shared the same hope, but reflected that the situation required close and continuous watching. It was a fallacy to think that world affairs could be properly considered by separating them into two distinct theatres, and in view of Chirol's health it was thought that the study of Eastern affairs should be encouraged in younger men. The Editor agreed and it was resolved to send a Special Correspondent to the East in the following year.

Chirol to Komura, September 7, 1909. Chirol to Komura, October 28, 1909.

Meanwhile, although the atmosphere in the West was relatively untroubled, it was realized in the office that the calm was no proof of security. On October 3 the Norddeutsche Zeitung, according to Mackenzie, Saunders's successor in Berlin. published a telegram from Tangier regarding a Morocco loan. Little interest was taken in the information; but a fortnight later, when the Paris Correspondent reported that the German firm of Mannesmann Brothers had secured a general mining concession. The Times became concerned. The German firm's relations with the Union des Mines were not clear. Saunders said that Paris believed that the German Government, in accordance with the Act of Algerias and the accord of February. 1909, would prefer to give its support rather to the Union than to "the extremely dubious and inordinately ambitious schemes of Mannesmann Brothers." Saunders's statement may not have been worded very diplomatically, but he was correct as to his facts. It was not the Wilhelmstrasse's policy to back the Mannesmanns. That became clear.

The policy of the *entente* did not appear to be as clear, even in a negative sense. The annexation of Bosnia had disturbed conditions so much, and there was so little Anglo-French cooperation, that Printing House Square had little expectation of anything but a passive policy. In November, on the eve of a visit to Paris, Chirol expressed himself pessimistically to Steed:

It will not be a very pleasant visit, I am afraid, as I shall have to talk to the French very seriously about their attitude in various questions, which is quite out of harmony with their (moral) obligations towards us under the Entente. The chief question is the importation of arms which, via Djibuti and Muscat, are pouring into Afghanistan, and North-West Frontier, and India itself. . . . Other questions of a similar character are the Ethiopian Railway, the attitude of France towards the Congo question, and the regular alliance formed between French and German financiers against us, not only in Constantinople but even in Russia. All this, of course, is for your private ear.

I will let you know later on whether I shall have been able to do anything. The French do not seem to realize that there is amongst a large section of public opinion here—with which, however, I do not in the least sympathize—a growing feeling that the Entente is not worth the risks in which it involves us, owing to the delicate situation in Morocco; and, of course, our professional pacifists would rather have us make friends with the Mammon of unrighteousness in the shape of Germany. To all these it would be grist to their mill if the truth had to be told with regard to the various questions to which I have above alluded.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Chirol to Steed, November 13, 1909. By "professional pacifists," Chirol meant those Liberal idealists who believed that good will alone "would divert Germany from an aggressive policy."

## ANGLO-FRENCH DIFFERENCES

Appearances, it was now admitted, pointed to France rather than to Germany as the source of anxiety, with Austria as a grave source of provocation. On December 10, 1909, *The Times* reported Baron von Schoen's speech in the Reichstag. While recognizing the smoothness of Franco-German relations, he said that the loan question had not made the hoped-for progress and emphasized the proofs France had given of her loyal intentions by even placing German interests first and her own second. Schoen was pleased to state in regard to the allotment of great public works, that the German and French contractors were cooperating. As for the Mannesmann Brothers, he said, the question of issuing concessions was one that had to be regulated by all the signatory Powers.

It very quickly became apparent, however, that the policy of the Wilhelmstrasse, far-sighted as it might be and calculated to give Germany the maximum profit in the course of time, was not ardently supported by the public opinion of the Empire. Throughout the Morocco negotiations the Pan-Germans, who had denounced their own Government as weak, or pro-French, claimed also that their influence was growing. The fact that the Union des Mines had a French chairman and Mannesmann a German director was quite sufficient to arouse nationalist opposition to what was represented as a French syndicate, and impatience at what seemed to be the Government's tepid policy. The Union des Mines, established in 1907 to develop the mineral resources of Morocco, was an international chartered company. The French interests, principally Schneider-Creusot, Cie. Marocaine and Hoskier, held 50 per cent. of the capital, Germany, principally Krupp, Gelsenkirchen, Thyssen, 20 per cent., English 10 per cent., and Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese the remainder. The firm of Mannesmann, though working with similar objects, being outside the Union, was necessarily in competition with it. It was in close touch with Mulay Hafid before and since his revolt against the Sultan. The aggressive commercial spirit of the Mannesmanns, combined with the passionate nationalism of the Pan-Germans, created a problem that, by the spring of 1910, had become grave. In March and April the French and German Governments were active in attempting to reconcile the Union and the Mannesmanns. Bethmann-Hollweg's firm stand against the Pan-German demand for a Mannesmann "monopoly" brought him the unstinted praise of The Times. (March 17, 1910.) As the controversy developed, the underlying principle of the "open door" came to the top. This was the sort

<sup>1</sup> See the Supilo Trial of December, 1909, referred to in Chapter XX.

of businesslike conception that everybody in the whole country could understand. English industrialists had not, so far, taken up the whole of the 10 per cent. of the capital of the Union to which they were entitled, and it was assumed in France as well as Germany that England was indifferent to the commercial exploitation of Morocco. The world had some justification for guessing that Britain had enough to think of without bothering about Morocco.

It was true that the period of relative quiet that had followed the Austrian coup and the Russian recognition extended throughout the summer and autumn of 1909. The diplomatic lull had now ended with Britain being less interested in Morocco than the North Sea. In Britain an agitation for increase and acceleration in naval building answered what was believed to be the German increase in number and rate. The clamour increased and. as the spring of 1910 progressed, became strident. In France there was to be noted a tendency, even in pro-British circles, to think that the attention given in Britain to the Navy was exaggerated. Clemenceau insisted to Saunders that it was not the condition of the British Navy that alarmed France, but that of the British Army. The foreign policy of both nations continued to be embarrassed by acute domestic controversy which aroused passions stronger than had been known for many years. Since the spring, France had been agitated by vast strikes and severe repressions by Clemenceau. Postal and telegraphic workers were among those that struck in May, 1910. On this side of the Channel, the excitement over the Budget and the Lords did not prevent the value of France as an ally being discussed; while on the other side of the Channel heads which had been agitated over alleged British greed in Turkey, and naval chauvinism, were now being shaken over the indiscipline of British labour. If the entente was not in danger it could hardly be said to be cordial. The Germans naturally did not fail to notice the bearing of their neighbours' domestic troubles on the international situation and their relevance to an accurate estimate of the strength of their alliances.

About Morocco, therefore, the thing to do was to avoid trouble. The prospect had not receded of a Japanese entanglement with America in circumstances which would forbid Britain to lend support to her ally. Moreover, the Japanese had meanwhile begun the preliminaries to a policy of naval expansion which, it was not denied in private conversation in Tokyo, must further strain relations with America.

# BRAHAM'S FAR FASTERN TOUR

In the summer of 1910 the paper chose Braham as its Special Correspondent for the Far East. He reported his impressions in a series of careful and long letters to Chirol which again did nothing to encourage optimism in the office. The Japanese, Braham reported, were credited in many informed quarters with a policy of aggression upon China and the Chinese mainland. His first talks with Japanese statesmen and officials convinced him that the suggestion was exaggerated. There was, he admitted, the awkward incident of Japan's annexation of Korea. It had upset *The Times* hardly less than Austria's annexation of Bosnia. Braham saw Komura on August 10 and thus reported to Chirol:

On receiving His Excellency's permission to speak with perfect frankness, I pointed out that the step would doubtless be violently criticised in many quarters and bring a certain amount of odium on Japan. As Japan's allies we should come in for a considerable share of that odium. You felt, I told him, that in these circumstances it would have been better if we had been taken into Japan's confidence and consulted before a final decision had been taken.<sup>1</sup>

The attitude towards China, it could not be denied, was threatening. Count Okuma, Braham reported on August 27, gave him "a three hours' lecture" on China, in which he made what the correspondent regarded as an "amazing statement" to the effect that if the Chinese Government went to pieces "Japan would have to assume control of the country." This "lecture" took place in August. Three months later when the correspondent was in China, Okuma's frank statement seemed less incredible. Writing from the Yangtze, Braham said:

If I were writing my letter of August 27 over again I should call Okuma's statement not "amazing," but merely "indiscreet." I remember how Komura insisted to me on the imminent probability that China might fail to meet her financial liabilities, that she was practically bankrupt already, and that the Powers might be compelled before long to take steps to secure the interests of foreign creditors; and I see the Japanese—including the Yokohama Specie Bank, practically a Government concern—are advancing money to Viceroys everywhere without any security or guarantee of any kind. And I remember how Ijuin insisted to me that in the event of serious disorder Great Britain and Japan must intervene to prevent anarchy and uphold the Central Government.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Braham's message concluded: "In reply Komura stated that months ago he had informed Sir Claude MacDonald, who had informed the British Government, that the situation was developing very rapidly and it might be necessary to proceed to annexation much sooner than had been anticipated; and since the middle of July, he (Count Komura) had been in consultation with Sir Edward Grey. To my suggestion that all this was after the decision had been inevitably taken His Excellency replied that they could scarcely consult their friends before they knew their own minds."

Fraser, *The Times* resident correspondent at Shanghai, confirmed Braham's observation and experience but took what Braham regarded as a pessimistic view of the near future. The Japanese, Fraser said, simply could not be resisted. Braham answered that Britain must support China diplomatically, *i.e.*, by openly criticising unjustified action by Japan and follow a general line of commenting critically upon her policy. This, Braham said, was both necessary and practicable. We could afford to do it and we could not afford not to do it. The Alliance was at least as useful to the Japanese as to us and it must be made clear to them that if they wished it renewed they must behave themselves. "But above all" said Braham

we should work towards a friendly and thorough understanding with the United States, whose interests in the Far East are identical with those of Britain. Our Alliance with Japan was made to preserve the common interests of all Powers in China by insuring the independence and integrity of the Chinese Empire and the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all Powers in China. We should therefore be acting in the spirit of the Alliance if we sought to work in co-operation with the United States towards that end.

Soyeda, whom Braham saw on August 7, was typical of his people in disregarding the danger of antagonizing America and in taking no more seriously any British attempts at restraint. Rather, the Japanese appreciation of Britain's difficulty led them to continue acting without previous intimation to London. As Braham reported on September 28, 1910:

The conclusion I came to in Seoul was the same as, to judge from your letter, you had already reached independently, that the alarming developments in Korea compelling the Japanese to decide at once on immediate annexation and leaving them no time to discuss matters with H.M.G. are an invention of Komura's. I feel sure the coup was planned and executed to strengthen the Cabinet against Seiyu-kai chauvinist attacks. Like you I don't feel inclined to waste any tears over Korean independence; but in view of the categorical statements made to [Sir Claude] MacDonald in December it should, I think, be a lesson to us that we cannot rely on the Japanese to give us timely information of their intentions.

Their intentions towards China were made more explicit by the increasing anarchy in China. Braham saw Ijuin in October. Discussing the attitude of the Powers the Japanese spokesman said it would be quite easy for Japan and Great Britain, whom the other Powers would have to follow, to lend such assistance to the Central Government that they would be able to maintain order. "To that I strongly demurred, insisting

#### IJUIN ON INTERVENTION IN CHINA

that the Chinese should be allowed to settle their own affairs as far as possible and that there should be no foreign intervention except to defend foreign life and property, and that only in case of the most urgent necessity and restricted to the narrowest possible limits." Ijuin then explained that he meant no more than Braham meant, that the intervention he contemplated would only be for the protection of foreign life and property, and if he had spoken of assisting the Central Government it was because that institution would be the only force capable of maintaining order. "But even after he had whittled down what he had just said I retained the impression that in the case of serious trouble in China we shall have great difficulty in preventing our allies from giving material assistance, for which they would demand compensation." Braham journeyed home with a heightened sense of the instability of the British position in the Pacific. On arrival at the office he found that the political situation in the West had not improved and could only discern a determination to make the best of a very bad job.

It had now become clear that the Franco-German accord of 1909 was extremely vague and gave no basis for the settlement even of simpler disputes than the Mannesmann affair. The Times regretted that while it was no more to British taste than to French for disputes to occur with Germany over Morocco, the influential pacifist element in Britain would make an active foreign policy very unlikely. The country as a whole, there was no doubt, was grateful for the continued evidence of good will on the part of the German Government. The net result of the Bosnian crisis was now obvious: people were glad to have kept out of war and they had a desire to reciprocate good will and thus pave the way for a better permanent understanding with Germany. Nor was the desire for peace limited to France and Britain. The failure of Russia's policy over Bosnia encouraged in certain Russian circles a desire to improve relations between St. Petersburg and Vienna. If a new Foreign Secretary were installed at St. Petersburg, which was always a possibility, a new start might be made by Vienna to place Austro-Russian relations on a better footing. Of course such a move, side by side with the German readiness to see France's point of view regarding Morocco, would harmonize the policies of the two Germanic Powers. It was remembered that Germany had no liking for, and nothing to gain from, Austrian coups as such.

The probability of decreased tension between Austria and Russia did not pass without notice. As long as such lessening of tension was no more than a *détente* the office would cordially welcome

it. The abundance of inflammable material in the Near East alone made the elimination of personal antagonism between Aehrenthal and Isvolsky strongly desirable. On the other hand, a step in the direction of a restoration of the Three Emperors' Alliance, which Chirol regarded as Germany's ultimate aim, was decidedly not to be welcomed. It would be the prelude to British isolation. Since the early months of 1910 the attitude of The Times, in particular of its Vienna Correspondent, had been cautious and relatively optimistic, with reservations regarding the activities of the Young Turks. Nor was this the only uncertain element. The great question which all Europe, not to mention Japan and America, asked was whether the entente Powers had the strength to stand up to the Germanic alliance when the next test came; if not, in neutral opinion, they had better throw up the sponge now. Steed's opinion was that the strength of the entente Powers pivoted upon the Italians; and to mention one thing, the situation in Montenegro, where Austria was active, was greatly perturbing them. And as for the "independence" of Aehrenthal's policy, it was more doubtful than ever, for everything now pointed to the existence of an agreement between Berlin and Vienna to pursue an active policy in the Balkans with, certainly, the idea in the background of cornering Russia and restoring the Three Emperors' Alliance. The death on May 6, 1910, of King Edward put a temporary stop to such speculations.

The pending arrival of Lord Rosebery in Vienna during September, 1910, however, gave Steed an opportunity to emphasize the arguments of a leading article in The Times of August 30. The Correspondent now insisted that real independence of Austria's foreign policy was a necessary preliminary to an improvement in Anglo-Austrian relations, and Rosebery's mission seemed to emphasise Austria-Hungary's importance as a Great Power independent of Germany. The British Ambassador suggested Steed's telegraphing to The Times in this sense, but he declined to admit the force of Cartwright's argument, on the ground that he could not associate himself with the representation, as a fait accompli, of an "independence" which only existed in the mind of Aehrenthal. Steed added that he saw no need for Britain and Austria to league themselves together against anybody else, but they would doubtless be well advised to agree. as occasion might arise, regarding their own concrete interests. He was ready and anxious, he said, to help in promoting good feeling between the two countries, and claimed that during the last seven years he had done more perhaps than any European writer to discredit the legend of the "inevitable break-up" of Austria. Only bad statesmanship could make it "inevitable." There was a risk, too, Steed thought, in Rosebery's visit being regarded as a move at the expense of British friendship with Russia, and a concrete admission that Russia was too weak to be of value to Britain as an ally. Isvolsky's retirement was now regarded as certain, and made the visit all the more untimely. St. Petersburg might have in prospect a change of policy as well as a change of Secretary. Aehrenthal's policy of re-establishing the Three Emperors' Alliance had its backers in St. Petersburg as well as in Berlin. But, Chirol and Steed were agreed, there was a difference: Aehrenthal wanted its pivot to be at Vienna, while Germany wanted it at Berlin. For either of these purposes the detachment of England from Russia was a pre-requisite. This was the heart of German and Austrian policy and would be so whether or not Aehrenthal remained at the Ball-platz.1

On (Sunday) September 11 Steed saw Rosebery, to whom he was well known, and who, "as usual, made fun of himself and of everything but, nevertheless, enquired very carefully about men and things in this country." By this time the optimism of the early months of the year had worn thin. In Steed's opinion not a few straws indicated the probability of trouble before long. The bare possibility raised the main question of Austro-Russian relations. "My own conviction," he advised Chirol,

is that Austria-Hungary will not contemplate any arrangement with Russia, unless she can force Russia to come barefoot to Canossa. I have seen communications from the Ballplatz to the Russian Embassy, bearing a date as recent as the 10th inst. in which the tone of haughty hostility is scarcely disguised by the usual urbanity of form. . . .

In view of this situation, it behoves us, I think, to be very vigilant, not to allow ourselves to be carried away by enthusiasms or resentments, but to let it be known that we cannot favour any wantonly expansive tendencies on the part of Austria nor countenance any manoeuvres tending to corner Russia. It is to the interest of Austria-Hungary herself that she should not be driven violently into the Balkans but should remain a factor in European equilibrium while exercising her natural influence over the Southern Slavs. Cartwright now declares this view, which I have always propagated in season and out of season, to be the view of Aehrenthal. If it is, so much the better; but what Cartwright says that Aehrenthal thinks is so much at variance with other and more positive indications that one is compelled to keep an open mind.<sup>2</sup>

Steed to Chirol, September 9, 1910.Steed to Chirol, September 15, 1910.

The autumn was marked by increased concern over the Balkan situation, which, Steed reported, was "nervous" without being as yet highly critical.

I do not think there is real cause for apprehension nor for any softening of the firm attitude taken up by France and England in the Turkish and Hungarian loan questions. A-H is too hard up to risk any adventure as yet, and, if we stand firm, the tactical errors committed during the past 18 months may remedy themselves. We have seemed to run after Aeh. lest he throw himself into the arms of Germany. Now William has insisted so loudly and so truly upon the dependence of A-H. on Germany that it is for Aeh. to take some steps towards France and us if he wishes us to believe his professions of independence. The lukewarm and even offensive references to Germany in his Delegation speeches show that he is in a bad temper and is not disposed to be over grateful to Germany, but it would be a mistake to think that they show anything more. The real, hard fact of the situation is that by his mismanagement of the annexation business, he spent, or caused to be spent, the floating reserves and Treasury balances in Austria and Hungary so that, at the present moment, he has not the wherewithal for any policy of adventure. As a sign of the financial tension in this country, I should tell you that the provincial Treasuries, where the greater part of the Treasury balances are kept, are now so empty that creditors possessing Government orders for payment have been asked to "call again" when the date for payment came round.

The President of the Anglo-Austrian Bank, one of Sir E. Cassel's oldest friends whose acquaintance I made at Marienbad, told me to-night, as an instance of the feeling prevailing in French financial circles, that a French friend of his, worth some £6,000,000, who owns a large number of Anglo-Austrian Bank shares, had written this morning to say that, in view of the political attitude of Austria, he, as a Frenchman, could not leave capital invested in this country. He therefore desired that all his bank shares should be sold forthwith.

In these circumstances Aeh. is not likely to take too many risks and it is easy to understand his feelings and those of the Austrian banks at the prospect of having to provide capital for Turkey. But Aeh. is none the less anxious to get into his hands all the trumps in the Balkan game so as to be able to play them whenever things go smash in Turkey. Hence his manoeuvres in regard to Bulgaria and Greece.<sup>1</sup>

The financial condition of Austria-Hungary was of the utmost importance, Chirol recognized. "I have always held that Berlin and Vienna cannot permanently finance the exorbitant needs of

<sup>1</sup> Steed to Chirol, October 27, 1910.

# AUSTRIA-HUNGARY'S FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

the Turkish Treasury, if the French and ourselves can keep the London and Paris markets hermetically closed against Turkey so long as she maintains her present attitude towards us." The awkward position existing at Constantinople was, in Chirol's opinion, in part due to British blunders in diplomacy. He consoled himself with the reflection that Germany, in backing the militant Young Turks, might find herself "left" just as she had been when she had backed Abdul Hamid. In connexion with the tightening of the financial curb from London and Paris. salutary as it was so far, one had to bear in mind the difficulty of controlling the "cosmopolitan financiers with their large Jewish element, which everywhere seem to display a marked leaning towards Germany-or, perhaps, more accurately, against Russia. and those who happen to be Russia's friends."1 no means relished the prospect of Britain's being drawn into antagonism to Turkey, since he regarded the Turkish problem as an aspect of the much larger and more important question of British relations with Moslem Powers.

The Moroccan situation fitted in to this larger question, and for that reason The Times was disinclined to second French pressure upon the Sultan. There was little doubt in Chirol's mind that France was bent upon increasing her hold upon the country. It appeared that the constitution of the Union des Mines did encourage French economic domination. Britain as well as Germany was shocked when, in December, 1910, a French warship visited Agadir, the "closed" port on the south Morocco coast. In Germany a great cry went up from the Pan-Germans that the Government should use the incident to support the claims of the Mannesmanns. The reply of Kiderlen-Waechter was that the incident was only trivial, that the French warships had only gone there to prevent gun-running; there was no cause for German alarm; the matter was in hand; &c., &c. The matter, however, speedily proved to be anything but in hand. Competition between the Union and the Mannesmanns increased side by side with the failure of the Powers to agree upon terms for its removal; and, at the same time, the political situation in Morocco rapidly worsened. Mulay Hafid, unable to subdue the revolt of his own subjects and to force the Europeans from the besieged city of Fez, Capital of Morocco, called for aid from France.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chirol to Steed, November 2, 1910; Chirol, who had been absent in India for the purpose of writing a series of special articles, had broken down on his return to England. In his absence Braham had deputised, and Chirol was not regularly corresponding until November.

At the end of the year the continuing budget crisis brought with it a serious weakening of Britain's influence abroad. France was acting with a minimum of consultation, while Russia was alarmed by the advance of British Socialism. Sazonoff paid a visit to Berlin in the autumn. In the circumstances, Bethmann-Hollweg's announcement in November, 1910, of a rapprochement with Russia¹ was regarded in the office as more than a mere form of words. The Chancellor's tone, though polite, was uncompromising, but Chirol decided not to dwell on the implications of the speech. "We are not in a position to bite, and there is therefore not much use in barking," he said to Steed. Russian policy followed a zig-zag course that mystified as much as discouraged Chirol.

In dealing with the question raised in January, 1911, regarding Aehrenthal's project of a leave of absence from the Ballplatz The Times refrained from expressing any anticipation that it might be the prelude to his final retirement from office. Such information as the paper possessed hinted that nowhere would Aehrenthal's retirement be viewed with greater equanimity than in Berlin. Something in the way of an assurance to that effect was, the office believed, part of the soothing syrup administered to Sazonoff when he was in Berlin.

The paper had every wish to avoid provoking the Austrian Minister. Reviewing the position at the New Year, Chirol came to the conclusion that The Times, equally with the country, could ill afford it. The outstanding events of the old year, the budget debates at home, the risks attending independent French policy in Morocco and the Russo-German rapprochement, were in favour of Germany. In addition, the heavy new British naval estimates were attended by renewed efforts to reach an understanding with Germany. They were unsuccessful. It was at last coming to be realized that in return for a naval understanding Germany was in a position to demand a far-reaching political agreement. The desired understanding must be offered on terms that the Empire simply could not afford. If this were not bad enough, Chirol was convinced that Britain could not afford a Russo-German agreement regarding the Persian section of the Baghdad Railway.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> December 14, 1910; Sir F. Cartwright, British Ambassador at Vienna, wrote to Sir A. Nicolson on December 23, 1910, that he saw Saunders, *The Times* correspondent, while in Paris. Saunders told him that the calm way in which Sazonoff's indiscretions in Berlin had been viewed in London had produced a somewhat unfavourable impression in Paris. Saunders had been asked to stir up British public opinion on the subject, but had wisely refrained. (*G. and T.* X, p. 587.)

That German power and appetite were growing was plain. In the February of the previous year (1909) she had confirmed France in new privileges in Morocco, and secured some for herself, and made both arrangements on the strength of her intervention against Russia and of the weakness of the Triple Entente thereby made manifest. The Accord lessened France's difficulties and increased Britain's. This had become clear in 1910. Britain was being isolated from Europe. Such a position did not help when she wished to talk business to Germany regarding naval construction. The Germans, on the other hand, were fast improving a bargaining-position that had already become the strongest in Europe.

But France's internal difficulties in Morocco remained serious. The rebel tribe of the Zaers killed Lieutenant Marchand, with others of his command. Conditions in other parts of the country were so critical that steps to end them were under consideration in Paris. The attitude of Kiderlen was that while the French right to punish the rebels was not questioned, the effect upon German public opinion of doing so was not to be ignored. On March 14, 1911, the French, while disclaiming any idea of extending their zone of occupation, ordered two battalions and two units of artillery to Casablanca. France also asked Mulay Hafid, upon his arrival at Rabat, where the insurgent tribe secured their supplies, to arrest and punish the culprit Zaers and to close the markets to the tribe until Marchand's assailants had been taken. As the Sultan did not carry out his promise to comply with these requirements, France decided to occupy Rabat. Again Kiderlen raised no objection beyond expressing on April 5 a fear of the reaction of German public opinion. Simultaneously, Cambon explained that establishment at Rabat would place France in the position of intervening at Fez on behalf of the Europeans there, should the necessity arise. Only the pressure of extreme necessity, Kiderlen thought, should be held to justify the step of occupying Fez, Rabat and Casablanca. It would make difficult all arrangements between France and Germany. It was known that the conditions at Fez were not tranquil. On February 28 a force had marched from Fez to subdue one of the tribes, leaving men in the Capital to the number of 200 which, it soon became obvious, was insufficient to maintain order among a population rapidly becoming disaffected.

In March, while demands were being made on France for the dispatch of a military expedition to Fez, Germany took advantage of the situation to raise money in the French market for the completion of the Baghdad Railway, 1 a scheme that appealed

<sup>1</sup> See Harris's telegrams in The Times of March 9, 17, 18, 29; April 5, 1911.

to certain circles in England, to the Government, but never to P.H.S. While there did not exist in the office at this time anything like a conviction that it was a first necessity to block German advances at all points, it was believed that any French and British money lent to Germany for the Baghdad, Anatolian, and any other railway would free funds for the expedition and increase of German naval construction.

On the naval question The Times stood as firmly as before. The country's security depended upon its power to outclass and outbuild the Germans. This was the doctrine shared by Buckle, Thursfield and Bell, while Chirol regarded Thursfield, responsible to the Editor for the presentation of the naval data, as deriving his ideas of strategy from sources that were not necessarily the best. It may well have been, however, that Chirol's criticisms, although formally made regarding Thursfield's sources of information and inspiration, were directed at Buckle. course, the recognition of the need for an adequate British Navy was not exactly equivalent to the recognition of a "German naval menace." The temper of the office was, it has been seen, not one of trouble-seeking. When the Declaration of London came before the country for ratification, the office was unanimously in favour<sup>1</sup> The intervention of "X" combined with the general outlook to deepen the depression of the office.

The great Budget and Lords debates still held in British political discussion a place that completely excluded the discussion of foreign affairs. This was bad enough but finally the office itself was beginning to feel the full brunt of Northcliffe's personal pressure. Inevitably, Northcliffe's denigration of the staff discouraged anything approaching a vigorous attitude towards affairs. No support in the leading articles was given to the Military Correspondent's views regarding the unity of strategy. Repington's articles, it was clear, represented the views of "a correspondent" whose conclusions were worth printing because they were worth discussing. But the Army had won little prestige in South Africa and, in the circumstances, nobody cared to create interest in such matters. Repington's articles were, however, taken seriously abroad. They were entitled "Tendencies in the German Army" and appeared in The Times for January 23, 30; February 6, 20, 1911. The Military Correspondent argued that the peace of Europe was secure only so long as Germany's rivals, by their preparation,

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XXIV, "End of the 'Old Gang'" pp. 748, ff, infra.

#### REPINGTON'S ARTICLES ON GERMAN STRATEGY

precaution and cooperation, deprived her of the reasonable hope of those rapid successes which her geographic situation required. Germany's geography was the key to her policy. "It is because England, provided she is not crushed at the outset by hostile initiative and surprise at sea, has the power to compel Germany to fight the long and dragging war which German strategists dread that English hostility is feared." The realities of the general Continental situation were different from what they had been and as they appeared now, he said in his fourth article.

A dozen years ago there was reasonable hope that the neutrality of the small countries bordering upon France and Germany would be respected in case of a Franco-German war, but no one to-day any longer believes it. The tendencies of German strategy and tactics during the past few years almost preclude the notion that the German strategist will be content to run his head against a French line of battle in the three narrow trôuées left open to a German advance. . . . In consequence an acute responsibility was thrust upon the Entente and not least upon Britain. How best to act, by land and sea, in case the pressing military and naval needs of Germany cause her to disregard the neutrality of the little countries on the flanks of the line of deployment of her armies, is a question to which the Defence Committee must have an answer cut and dried. (February 20, 1911.)

The Moroccan situation lent the Kaiser's remarks a certain aptness. The position, it has been seen, was accurately estimated by Repington when he wrote in The Times that French security was a British interest. In an article entitled "The Debate on Defence" published on April 7, Repington pointed to the extent of German preparedness and discussed the situation arising from the slowness of Russian mobilization; its seasonal timing and the effect of winter upon the mobility of an army. "The preservation of France from an attack of this character," he wrote, "is absolutely vital for our subsequent security." More specifically, he added, "It is indispensable that we should be able and ready to send a thoroughly efficient force to aid France." Repington admitted that it was a hard thing to secure general recognition of the fact, "but the fact is none the less true that the prompt despatch of a sufficient contingent to aid France against German aggression is an indispensable necessity of the times." He also believed that vital military and geographical factors favoured Britain. "If we had to choose a country which would be hostile to us and would be endowed with all the moral and material strength which Germany possesses, we would rather select the

territory occupied by the German Empire as the seat of this hostile State than the territory of any other Great Power in the world." In his opinion "the naval pressure of the British was overpowering."

The military situation of Germany was not good, strategically considered, her military position is, in fact, detestable; exposed as she is to attack by two first-class Powers of great military strength. So long as the Powers of the Entente hold together and support their diplomacy by armaments equal to their population and resources it would be dangerous for Germany and her allies to challenge them.

Colonel Russell, British Military Attaché in Berlin, who was present at the ceremonies of the annual inspection of the Imperial Guard Dragoons which took place on March 3, had the privilege of a long conversation with the Emperor, who convinced him of the passionate sincerity of his wish for a good understanding with Britain. He expressed his belief that no exchange of naval information was of any use and that what was wanted was a political understanding. The British were wrong to form an alliance with a decadent country like France instead of with Germany. "All my life," the Emperor continued, "I have worked for a good understanding with England, but you do not help me. Look at Repington's letters to The Times saying that you ought to practise the same tactics as the French, so that you can fight side by side against the Germans. Excuse my saying so, but the few divisions you could put into the field could make no appreciable difference."1

If such arguments were disagreeable reading to the English, their frank utterance in *The Times* gave no comfort to the Germans. They took careful note of the writings of *The Times* Military Correspondent who was also the Editor of the *Army Review* and had access to officials and official sources. It was important to know whether and how far Repington's point of view was shared by the responsible people in the War Office.

By April 21, the situation in Fez had deteriorated rapidly and was becoming so desperate that *The Times* was unable to contemplate it without anxiety, which was not relieved by Saunders's report that, if the situation did not improve, an expedition might be sent. On April 24, *The Times* published the news that the French Government were ordering colonial troops to be in readiness. A week later, April 30, a statement in

<sup>1</sup> Russell to Goschen, March 3, 1911. (G. and T. VI, p. 594.)

# THE KAISER QUOTES REPINGTON

the Norddeutsche Zeitung, quoted by Mackenzie, and published in the issue of May 1, was considered highly significant: "A breach of important provisions of the Algeciras Act, even if the breach were brought about by the force of external circumstances and against the will of the Power concerned, would restore to all of the Powers their complete freedom of action, and might, in this way, lead to consequences of a kind which cannot at present be seen." The promulgation of this doctrine in the semiofficial journal could not be regarded as contributing to the solution of the trouble. Saunders on the following day reported the French feeling that the statement was inconsistent with the repeated declarations by Germany that were finally incorporated in the agreement of 1909. The Times, however, eager to put a good face upon unpromising features, preferred to believe that the declaration indicated that "Germany has no present intention" of acting contrary to those "interests of France" which she expressly acknowledged two years ago to be "bound up with the maintenance of internal peace in Morocco." And in a final sentence The Times laid emphasis upon the support given by Mackenzie to Steed's telegram of May 10 as reporting correctly that in this matter France could count upon the loyal support of Russia as well as of this country. (May 13, 1911.) On May 25 The Times published Harris's telegram announcing that the French column had arrived at Fez on May 21, and a leading article on May 25 congratulated our ally, who has "of course, no intention of remaining in Fez any longer than may be absolutely necessary." Of this there was no doubt. "France lays her plans frankly before the world, confident in their honesty, and without fear that they can give rise to any rational misgivings of her purposes." But throughout the period the attitude of the Spaniards had given cause for a degree of anxiety hardly less than that occasioned by the semi-official declaration of the Norddeutsche Zeitung: and, in Harris's view, nothing could imperil the tranquillity of North Morocco more than the intervention of any European Power in that part of the Kingdom. On June 7 the Spaniards thought fit to land at Larache and advance towards Alcazar, thereby, in Harris's words (June 10), rendering the whole situation one of "considerable gravity."1 On the 27th the French Government fell and Caillaux came in at

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> From Tangier on July 1, 1911, Mr. Herbert White, British Consul at Tangier, wrote informing Grey of a conversation with Harris on June 30. The Spanish Minister had complained to him that the articles appearing lately in *The Times* had done much harm to the Spanish cause, and that the Spanish Government regretted the change of policy in that influential newspaper. Harris denied that there had been any change but that he had been bound to criticize the recent action of the Spanish Government at Larache and Alcazar, and their attempt to exclude non-Spanish enterprise in the Moorish districts adjoining their possessions. (G. and T. VII, No. 341.)

the head of a Ministry that included Delcassé, which was reassuring to those who based their policy on the Anglo-French entente. But Caillaux also brought in Jaurès, and it was a commonplace among the Socialists that it was the policy of Britain to keep France and Germany apart. Thus the situation became full of danger for Britain.

Four days later the Germans decided upon a new move and on the 3rd of July The Times reported it: "GERMAN ACTION IN MOROCCO: WARSHIP AT AGADIR: A Strained Situation." Seckendorff, the German Minister at Tangier, had notified the Sultan's representative on July 1. Immediately subsequent issues of the paper were full of dispatches from Morocco and from the European Capitals. The Times, from the beginning, assumed that the position was grave, but its public attitude was merely "matter of fact." Steed had wired from Vienna that this German coup was regarded with little satisfaction by Germany's former "brilliant second." On the 6th Mr. Asquith as Prime Minister spoke, seriously but briefly, regarding British interests, and the paper amplified his statement on the following day. The implications of the German move were not equally realized by all. The Times correspondent in Berlin, while denouncing the dispatch of the Panther as sudden, provocative, and clumsy, admitted in his private correspondence that France had brought it upon herself. The view of the office was that while this was true. Britain was vitally interested in the use made by Germany of the incident seen in its historical setting. Whether by the force of events or the conscious direction of the French, the present situation in Morocco differed materially from that in 1906, i.e., the date of the Act of Algeciras. In reviewing that Act in the light of the ensuing five years, and placing the immediate position at Agadir in the wide context of international relations, The Times held that it was not the Sultan's authority, so much as the entente, that was at stake. The office had for months been of the opinion that German interest in Morocco was infinitesimal as compared with German interest in making a European question of it. There was now no alternative but to support France. It was foreseen that the terms which the Germans were about to demand would be a supreme test. They were the last people in the world to miss any opportunity to apply pressure. The answer of the entente would prove whether the association of France and Britain was strong enough to endure. The real strength of pro-British. or pro-entente feeling in Paris, under Caillaux, would become clear.

At home the public interest was slight. On the third of the

#### ARRIVAL OF THE PANTHER AT AGADIR

month, Metternich when reporting to the Wilhelmstrasse had said that:

Sir Edward Grey opened a conversation with me... by saying that it would be utterly desirable that public opinion did not get into a state of excitement. I replied that such was not the case in Germany, and that here papers like *The Times* and *The Daily Mail* kept relatively quiet, while *The Westminster Gazette* even defended the German point of view.<sup>1</sup>

In less than three weeks after this conversation, the German pressure for compensation had its effect. On July 20 *The Times* published a summary of what was understood to be Germany's idea of a settlement. It was described in a leading article as "extravagant" and "impossible to believe as seriously contemplated."

The article was responsible for an immediate change in the British attitude, national and official, towards the issue. The terms, so far, were only guessed at. Those reported in the article in *The Times* of July 20 had instant reactions. Metternich reported on the day of publication that:

To-day's *Times* publishes in a conspicuous position an editorial note, beginning with the words "We understand" regarding the extent of Germany's demands for compensation. . . .

I am informed that the publication of this [communication] in *The Times* has caused a certain uneasiness, particularly in financial circles.<sup>2</sup>

Schoen, writing from Paris to Bethmann-Hollweg on the following day, argued that:

The Times article about the German demands for compensation is being discussed here with great satisfaction, as evidence of the fact that England will oppose too far-reaching German demands with all determination and support France with all energy. The Matin feels entitled to assure its readers that the article in the London newspaper was inspired by the Foreign Office.<sup>3</sup>

Schoen added that particular importance was attached to the threat in *The Times* of sending British warships to Agadir. The main article giving an account of the German demands originated, thought Metternich in spite of von Schoen, in the office of the *Matin*, and *The Times* merely threw in the phrase "it is understood" for the purpose of creating the impression

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg, July 3, 1911. (G.P. XXIX, p. 164.)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg, July 20, 1911. (G.P. XXIX, p. 198.)

<sup>3</sup> Schoen to Bethmann-Hollweg, July 21, 1911. (G.P. XXIX, p. 205.)

of semi-official inspiration.<sup>1</sup> The publication in *The Times* was naturally seen in London as an event of some significance. Precisely what it meant was not yet clear, but the German Press at once took up the matter.

The Koelnische Zeitung (morning edition) wrote on the 21st, that "The Times, as the English centre of anti-German agitation, makes to-day a point in elaborating the allegation by the Matin to the effect that the German Government demanded from France the cession of all her possessions in Equatorial Africa. . . "The contents of the article are quoted, and the article ends by saying that The Times, the paper which is standing up against "German greediness" with artificially exaggerated indignation, keeps open the retreat in case its conjectures and the conjectures of its business friends (Kartellfreunde) of the big press gang (Pressklüngel)<sup>2</sup> should not be correct. . . . "We are firmly convinced that the diplomats who are negotiating in Berlin will make haste to explain to the paper the actual state of the question, remembering the great importance The Times had when Lord Palmerston was in office."

On July 22 The Times published a report of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's since famous speech at the Mansion House, in which he affirmed that "peace at any price would be a humiliation," and thus commented upon it:

Mr. Lloyd George's clear, decisive, statesmanlike reference last night to the European situation created by the German demands in West Africa will be endorsed without distinction of party by his countrymen. . . . The purport of such demands as were outlined in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Metternich to Bethmann-Hollweg. (G.P. XXIX, p. 198.) Metternich says this was the opinion of Reuter; von Schoen reported the *Matin* as saying that the information came to *The Times* from the Foreign Office. No papers on the point exist in the archives of P.H.S. It is not improbable that von Schoen was correct.

<sup>2</sup> This catch-word possibly derives from Schiemann or some semi-official source. His article in the Kreuzzeitung of July 26 attacks a "clique" associated with Le Temps. The Hamburgische Korrespondent associates The Times with Le Temps, and the same journal on August 2 (morning edition) noted that "just now, once more, we have seen an example of the excellent ability of our Western neighbours to raise political agitation. One may think what one likes about the notorious press-triangle Temps-Times-Novoye Vremya, but one will have to admit that it serves its aims with incontestable cleverness. Exactly as once before over the Algeciras conference, the present negotiations between Berlin and Paris are being conducted with an obligation, under the word of honour, to observe complete discretion. And exactly as once ago, the Paris press, and in the first place the Matin, before which every French Government trembles, publish daily, and hardly without connivance, alleged revelations in order to discredit the German attitude. Those revelations are being busily spread by The Times and its accomplices on this side of the Channel." Pourtalès, German Ambassador at St. Petersburg, reporting to the Chancellor on August 25, named together the same three journals in a complaint he made to Neratoff. Pourtalès told him that everybody knew that Wilton, The Times correspondent, was friendly with Jerogoff of the Novoye Vremya. (G.P. XXVII, p. 961.) National Zeitung of September 5 (morning edition) adds to the "triangle" the New York Sun. There is no evidence in P.H.S. Papers of any "triangle."

# LLOYD GEORGE'S MANSION HOUSE SPEECH

Berlin last week is nothing less than a claim for absolute European predominance. Neither France nor Great Britain could have entertained them for a moment without confessing themselves overborne by German power. That is not the intention of our French neighbours, nor is it our own.

The office, with the exception of Edward Grigg (now Lord Altrincham), saw the issue quite clearly as a European and not as an African, clash. It was convinced that no British Government could suffer so great a change to be made in the distribution of power in Africa even were a French Government to be found feeble enough to sanction it. There was not wanting a suspicion that the settlement between France and Germany might be based upon an agreement which would be prejudicial to British interests, more especially as the Mansion House speech demanded a That could not easily be "arranged." German withdrawal. Grigg, who had joined the staff in 1903 and rejoined it in 1908 after an absence abroad, entertained a conception of Empire responsibility, Empire defence, in fact a doctrine of Imperialism, that was new and not yet understood or shared widely in Printing House Square.1

Personally I do not in the least mind her bagging the whole of equatorial Africa if she wants it. She will only be buying trouble and helping the Imperial movement which seems to me quite essential if we are permanently to maintain an adequate standard of naval and military strength. None of the defence authorities here, so far as I can make out, differ from this view.<sup>2</sup>

In the opinion of the older men there remained a direct European and, therefore, indirect Imperial objection to letting Germany "bag" anything like the whole of Equatorial Africa. Germany was not really interested in "bagging" Africa; she was out to "bag" Europe. The complete destruction of France would be the inevitable consequence of allowing Germany to acquire Equatoria as a reward for the dispatch of the Panther. Such was Chirol's estimate of the broad situation, in which Morocco was merely a subsidiary factor; and this, too, was the estimate that was accepted in Germany. When Sir John French had a conversation with the Kaiser on August 2 and 3 during an inspection of troops at Altengrabow, his Majesty took the opportunity of telling French that he "did not think France would ever fight him unless egged on and supported by us and our Press." He proceeded to mention Harmsworth, the Daily Mail, and also Moberly

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For Grigg's contribution to *The Times* and the new British Imperialism, see the Chapter "The New Imperialism," to be published in Vol. IV of this work.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Grigg to Gordon Browne in Berlin, July 27, 1911.

Bell as being most "hostile to Germany" and doing much harm.1

Weeks passed in the attempt to reconcile the French and German positions. In Saunders's words "Germany is living on her prestige." She was not, in reality, so strong. But he admitted that the results of two years' pressure were tangible. "In 1909 she compelled Russia to give way, and in 1911 France has not only had to adapt her policy in Morocco to German requirements, but has likewise had to pay for making the change." September went without a solution being found. In Berlin Gordon Browne was studying, in contrast with writers in the French Press, to preserve a balanced and almost neutral attitude. This line was followed with the approval of Braham, who was in charge during Chirol's absence. The Foreign Department was by no means happy with the French attitude. Braham confided to Browne his doubt

whether we hear the whole of the exact facts from the French sources from which alone information seems to be leaking out, and, of course, one never knows with what object the inspired newspapers in Berlin blow hot or blow cold. My own feeling is very strong that Germany intends to get an agreement, even if she has to give way on a good many points to do so. The hardening of public opinion in France is, on the whole, to be welcomed as showing the Germans that they can no longer intimidate the French. It has an immediate danger as some of the expressions of this hardening are unfortunately very provocative.

What rather distresses me is that British interests are bound to suffer by the settlement. The freer hand the French obtain in Morocco the more power they will have to strangle British, as well as other non-French, trade and enterprise and all impressions tend to show that they will use that power in the narrowest possible way. And developments are quite conceivable in which it might be awkward for us to have the French too firmly entrenched in Morocco, and especially to have them in absolute control in Tangier. That cannot be allowed to affect the hearty support we are compelled to give them on general political grounds, but I confess it very materially weakens any feelings of partisanship I might otherwise have.<sup>2</sup>

The relief which greeted the delayed prospect of an agreement was dashed by a sudden and startling dispute which arose between Italy and Turkey over Tripoli. This new source of anxiety held up the final settlement of the Franco-German con-

<sup>1</sup> Note by Lord French in G. and T. VII, p. 462.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Braham to Gordon Browne in Berlin, September 20, 1911.

#### ITALY AND TRIPOLI

troversy. The Mediterranean corollary to the Franco-German adjustment of the Morocco situation now drove Germans, French and British alike into highly awkward expedients. The circumstances prevailed upon the Germans to say that the Italians had not acted in imitation of themselves but solely to forestall the French. The Times was compelled to support the Italians instead of the Moslems who had its real sympathy. The agreement hung in the air, although "the shock produced by Italy's sudden coup must have reminded real statesmen everywhere that this is no time for haggling over niceties of draftsmanship." Peace had not been so endangered since the Bosnian annexation. The essentials of a Moroccan concordat had been agreed and notwithstanding the French march into Fez and the German descent upon Agadir, the Italian irruption into Tobruk was not to be interpreted in Moroccan or African terms. The Italian stroke might be a misuse of power, but in its political aspect it possessed solely a European character; and, it appeared, a morally indifferent one. Steed writing to Northcliffe also expressed a purely political judgment:

I am glad that the paper is now standing firm on the Tripoli question. There was at first a tendency to wobble and it reappeared at the beginning of the "atrocities" agitation. Just before the ultimatum was presented, the office asked me for suggestions as to policy and I urged the expediency of avoiding censorious criticism of Italy and of remembering that Italy will in future count her friends and enemies according to their present attitude towards this, her first genuinely national effort since her unity was accomplished. I added that, from the point of view of practical politics, it would not be disadvantageous to us and France if Italy, a member of the Triple Alliance, were engaged elsewhere at a moment when Germany was following an aggressive policy towards the Anglo-French entente.

Steed, was well acquainted with the Countess Jean de Castellane (née Princess Talleyrand-Périgord), who had informed him that the French Generals were working on the expectation of war in the spring of 1912; and the French Ambassador at Vienna had for three months been saying something to the same effect. For his own part Steed said

I would be surprised if war were to come within the next six months, but I should not care to predict the maintenance of peace for much more than a year. The precarious position of German industry and the determination of the Prussian Junker class to force on, if possible,

<sup>1</sup> The Times had warned Italy that British opinion would be unanimous in condemnation of her move, and the correspondent had left Tripoli for Malta on account of the strictness of the Italian censorship. See The Times for October 31 for the "opening of the flood-gates of blood and lust."

some foreign complication in order to prevent the destruction of Junker privileges by internal reform are, to my mind, the main elements in the situation. In different ways both of them make for war. Our interest is to see that we are not enticed into offending France by concluding a dupe's bargain with Germany and that we do not, by a show of ill-will towards Italy, consolidate the rickety Triple Alliance. Above all we must get our Army into order and see that our reserves of weapons and ammunition are sufficient for all possible emergencies.<sup>1</sup>

The "Chief" replied, November 16, 1911, that his views were entirely Steed's:

In regard to Italy, I went out of my way to write a leading article in the *Daily Mail* which was reprinted in every Italian newspaper; but, between ourselves, the Italians have behaved extremely badly in Tripoli. It has been very difficult work to support them When I say that they have behaved badly I am telling you what I have heard from eyewitnesses who are well known to me. If Lady Northcliffe and I are in London in January, we will have pleasure in calling upon the Countess Jean de Castellane, but she need not worry herself as to the *entente*, because I am a firm adherent and am always working privately and publicly, for it.<sup>2</sup>

In Britain, generally, the precise meaning and obligation of the entente was no clearer than in 1904. Only a very small minority held the view that the maintenance of France in the front rank of great Powers was a primary British interest. Few believed that the repeated tests to which Germany had subjected the entente during the seven years of its existence proved that a definite Franco-British alliance was necessary; or that such a development would alone preserve the entente; or that it was the only language that Germany would understand. Reasoning of this order was not common in the office. The Times Military Correspondent was an exception. He continued trying to win support for the turning of a vague entente into a precise military and naval alliance. His appeal was listened to in the country generally with great reluctance. To admit openly that Britain was no longer free to act independently was unpalatable to Englishmen. The Times published on November 24, 1911, dispatches from its correspondents in Paris and Berlin saying that German policy had been given definite form: a revised German naval programme only in return for a revised British foreign policy. The Germans had evidently taken a poor view of British prospects.

It is true that public interest was still focused upon the national

<sup>1</sup> Steed to Northcliffe, November 11, 1911.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Northcliffe to Steed, November 16, 1911.

finance. Lloyd George, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, found that he was expected to provide for dreadnoughts out of money that had been set aside for social services. He made up his mind that if social services such as old age pensions and social insurance were not to suffer, revenue could only be found by increasing the levies on land and upon "unearned increment." The rejection of Lloyd George's Finance Bill in 1909 by the Lords led to a campaign violent to a degree that inevitably excluded all consideration of foreign affairs. The country was in a state of turmoil when King Edward died in 1910. At this point party hostility was more bitter than ever. The Times was inevitably on the side of the Conservative Party. Buckle was no admirer of old age pensions or social insurance and he wanted the money for dreadnoughts. It need not be said that the paper stood by the House of Lords in opposition to the Parliament Bill. For the mass of the British people the political sensation of the summer of 1911 was not the arrival of the Panther at Agadir, but King George V's acceptance of Asquith's advice to him to exercise his prerogative to secure the passing of the Parliament Bill. This settled the matter. But immediately after the adjournment of Parliament, Asquith, as The Times knew, would be forced to summon a special meeting of the Committee of Imperial Defence.

In the office, it was believed there was something more to be done, though there was division upon what it should be. least it was agreed that it was not enough to pay up and build up. Buckle, while free from prejudice, was strongly inclined to accept the old division of war into naval and military compartments, and to respect the privileges of the senior Service. A new "scientific" school, who held that all war was one, had succeeded through the medium of the Invasion and Beresford inquiries in reaching their first objective, i.e., recognition that defence in the future could not be what it had been in the past. The scientific people had won Buckle's adhesion to their policy of a Naval War Staff, which should be responsible for cooperation with the General Staff, and so make possible the preparation of combined coast and colonial defence with military transport and escort. The Times Naval Correspondent remained unconvinced either of the necessity, or of the practicability, of a joint General Staff. Early in January, 1912, The Times Military Correspondent reported that when, some weeks before, he discussed the new plans with Churchill and Haldane, he saw signs of a tendency to dethrone the Defence Committee from its proper place. Churchill, so Repington said, did not intend to place the head of the War Staff directly under

the First Sea Lord. The fact was that neither in P.H.S. nor out of it was there any agreement as to high defence policy. Thursfield was at loggerheads with Repington and, with the assent of Buckle, wrote against the dispatch, in foreseeable circumstances, of an Expeditionary Force. The Military Correspondent fruitlessly and at great length argued the point with the Editor. On January 7, Repington was able to tell Buckle that

You will see from enclosed letter from Haldane—which please keep to yourself and return to-night—that the right course has at last been taken. But when the scheme is published this week, please ask yourself whether the War Course, which required reorganization from top to bottom in system of entry, instruction, &c., has been placed on a proper footing. I fear not, and though I have tried at the last moment to get the necessary changes made, I am not sure whether they will appear in the Manifesto. It is only by a long and strenuous course of training in staff duties that staff officers can be formed, and you must not think that because we have the name we have the thing. I shall not reply to Thursfield at present in view of the forthcoming announcement, but Clemenceau, Cambon, and every other French statesman will tell you that the only help of real service to them is the military force which we can place in line in 14 days.

This had long been Repington's conviction. The only member of the staff who agreed with him was Steed, who brought a Continental view to bear. Repington proceeded to deliver his last word:

Thursfield's article has fortunately not been noticed yet in France, but if it is it will do serious harm. The whole argument, which bristles with controversial points, is designed to lead up to Thursfield's Radical view that no military force should be sent to the Continent. This means the end of the Entente. . . .

The Editor could see no sufficient reason for abandoning the common opinion of the country that war was mainly the Navy's job. If efficient, it was, and would be, competent to deal with Germany's fleet by attack, and with her population by blockade. And, since, for Buckle, war was defence, he could even disregard Repington's reminder that two First Sea Lords, the two last in office, were both agreed that the dispatch of troops to France could proceed safely. The entente was safe so long as Britain was strong at sea.

The fall of the Caillaux Cabinet early in January, 1912, by no means lessened the paper's satisfaction with the Franco-German agreement regarding Morocco, which had been one

of its accomplishments. As to the circumstances which had brought down the Caillaux Ministry it was only important in England to note that they proved France to be in no mind to substitute for the existing policy of the alliance with Russia and the entente with England any system which might expose her to a German alliance, or an understanding, upon unequal terms. On January 15, the new Government was found to consist of what The Times described as a "strong team": Raymond Poincaré as Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, with Briand as Minister of Justice, Millerand as Minister of War, and Delcassé at the Marine. Poincaré's statement that France would be faithful to her existing friendships and would take care that the Army and Navy, "those sacred bulwarks of the Republic and the country," were to be maintained in full efficiency was applauded in a leading article. (January 17, 1912.) "Faithfulness to existing friendships" was a phrase in frequent use during the next month when Anglo-German conversations of importance were instituted. In France there was nervousness lest the money released by an Anglo-German understanding should be spent upon improving German land forces. A fresh attack of nerves marked the announcement in the Commons that Lord Haldane was visiting Berlin for the purpose of discussing a naval agreement. The Berlin Correspondent reported on February 10, that political circles in the German Capital expected the British Minister to make suggestions regarding a rearrangement in Africa as well as to discuss competition in armament. The Times of the day before the publication of this dispatch had remarked upon the inexpediency of such talks as appeared to be contemplated.

Saunders reported (March 19) that the French as a whole felt that no agreement with Britain was possible so long as Germany valued her armaments as a chosen instrument of aggressive diplomacy instead of as an essential of national defence. By the end of March it was known that the Haldane mission had not served any useful purpose. The view of *The Times* was confirmed. German policy was to build. That this was so was proved to the satisfaction of P.H.S. in the following month when the German Chancellor introduced his new Defence Bills. *The Times*, in recording Bethmann-Hollweg's recognition that there was no cause for the slightest uneasiness since nobody wanted to attack Germany, and Germany had no thirst for war, laid emphasis upon his other statements that German strength matched the weight of the Reich's influence in the international questions, which affected it. The leading article (April 23, 1912)

thus summed up the situation: "It is not that Germany wants war, but she wants, whenever it suits her, to be able to reinforce her diplomacy by a significant reminder of her increasing military and naval strength." This conclusion, to which *The Times* had been forced by ten years' close observation of German policy, was not shared in 1912 as widely as the paper desired, and believed the safety of the country required. The Foreign Department hoped that, since the domestic and party position had now been cleared by the passage of the Parliament Bill, men would give closer attention to foreign affairs.

But public opinion, so far as it noticed entente policy, was prone to regard it as an instrument that primarily served the needs of France and Russia. It was not forgotten that the alliance had already enabled these Powers to conclude occasional deals, such as the Morocco Agreement and the Potsdam Treaty, the terms of which showed little regard for British interests; while, at the same time, Britain's association with the two Powers allowed a drift towards a position which gave little prospect of friendly arrangements with Germany. At any time, too, the interested public was inclined to think, notwithstanding "Faithfulness to existing friendships," Britain might be confronted with arrangements between France and Germany that would shut British enterprise out of Morocco. More serious was the possibility that arrangements between Russia and Germany might work to our detriment in Persia. That Britain's chosen deliberate looseness of understanding with her associates was bound to have disadvantages as well as advantages was overlooked. The policy recommended by Rosebery of turning the entente into a regular alliance, carrying with it definite obligations on both sides, was not approved either in the country or in Printing House Square, where only Steed and Repington were in favour. A policy of clear-cut understandings with France and Russia which would let Britain know exactly where she stood was frigidly received by the Editor. It was not the policy of The Times to assume that Germany was Britain's enemy. Hence, to go farther in the direction of an alliance than the existing circumstances warranted was uncalled for. The justifiable purpose of the entente was clear enough to give diplomatic support such as Britain had effectively given France in 1906 at Algeciras and twelve months ago at Agadir. In any case, as long as it was possible to work for a naval agreement with Germany it would be inconsistent to discuss a military alliance with France. The division of Europe into two armed camps was an evil that must be avoided by

#### NO FRANCO-BRITISH MILITARY ALLIANCE

every means. Of course, if France and Russia were to be systematically subjected to pressure from Germany in order to bring them into her orbit, they could resist only if that were their policy and interest; and only then if they could count upon support from Britain. That support must be given, otherwise Britain would be isolated. But, while it was possible that a closer definition of the character of that support might limit the opportunity for German aggression, it might also encourage French chauvinism, and Russian expansionism; all at British risk and expense. This was how Chirol saw it. France and Russia were aware that if they allowed themselves to be successfully intimidated by Germany, and brought within her diplomatic system. Britain would at once feel the effect. It was not so certain, however, that the dominating influences in France and Russia realized that, while Britain's position would thus be rendered immediately dangerous, their own, in the long run, could not fail to be disastrous.

In addition, when British public opinion considered foreign commitments, certain awkward facts such as the continuing revolutionary agitation in Russia and the great strikes in France, came into view. Nevertheless, in due time the events of the previous autumn forced themselves upon attention. In the spring of 1912 it was realized in naval and military circles that six months earlier Europe had been nearer war than at any of the previous crises. Defence measures, and the relations thereto of the General Staff, were now occupying a Cabinet which had already been heavily burdened with naval competition. May, when Baron Marschall's appointment as Ambassador in succession to Count Metternich was announced, The Times welcomed him while aware that in certain quarters his arrival was interpreted as a signal that a powerful assault upon the entente with France was about to be made. On the day following the appearance of the cordial leading article, Saunders embodied in his Paris message the warning that Marschall was "one of the most seductive managers of the Press that ever engaged in diplomacy. He knows there is no bait like news and he is one of the greatest living sources, both of news and views." Comment on the appointment was so widespread that The Times found it necessary on May 13th to protest that the appointment even of so capable a representative of German interests was hardly the European event that some took it to be; but, the paper added, it would be well not to initiate anything in the nature of a "Press campaign" in favour of the new Ambassador. or his policy, on British soil. The opportunity was taken to restate the essentials of British foreign policy and to insist that they were plain for all to see in Grey's speech made at the end of November, 1911. The Foreign Secretary then recalled that this country had now been for seven years on terms of intimate friendship with France, and emphasized that our friendships were neither exclusive nor jealous. "But," added *The Times*, "they are based, to borrow Baron Marschall's own phrase, upon the 'law of facts." (May 13, 1912.)

Public attention, which had so long been distracted by domestic issues, was now excited over Ulster. The repercussions of this crisis involved the Army, and within the War Office itself, it exerted a paralysing effect. Schemes for national preparedness which Asquith had inaugurated in August of the preceding year were not progressing. To Ireland on the verge of civil war and with the Ulster leaders importing arms (from Hamburg), there was joined the Marconi "scandal" and Welsh dis-establishment. In sum, there was little room in British public opinion for appreciation of the lessons of Agadir, or of what Marschall called the "law of facts." The atmosphere on the Continent was not the less heavy for the distractions in Britain and elsewhere. Even if the possibility of a détente between France and Germany, and between Germany and Britain, were not actually menaced by the Italian descent upon Tripoli, it was appreciated that the consequences of the Italian success could hardly fail to have disturbing consequences. Complications in the Balkans caused by Italian agitators, rendered impetuous by Tripolitan triumphs, were not impossible.

Keen interest was aroused when, on July 4-5, 1912, the Kaiser and the Emperor discussed the Balkan situation at Port Baltic. The meeting of the two Emperors was cordial and the Imperial Chancellor afterwards travelled to the Russian Capital to continue the discussions with Sazonoff. The value of the conversations at the Baltic meeting, The Times affirmed, lay in the fact that it strengthened upon both sides the desire to keep permanently in touch for the better maintenance of European peace. On July 9 a leading article mentioned the semi-official North German Gazette's note on the conversations. It displayed, "to say the least, a certain tardiness in grasping their full significance." The real importance, now asserted The Times, lies rather in the German and not merely the Russian recognition of the fact that the value of the present grouping of the Powers for the maintenance of the balance of power and of peace had been already proved, and that there could be no question of effecting

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alterations of any kind in it. The Vossische Zeitung chose the moment to assure its readers that in the event of war with France and England, every German was confident of victory. This was in sharp contrast with the communiqué agreed at Port Baltic on July 6, which, it was held in P.H.S., was equivalent to an admission by Germany that she accepted the principle of the balance of power. The Berlin dispatch, printed in The Times of July 8, said that

The following remarkable communiqué, presumably issued by agreement, was telegraphed from Port Baltic yesterday:—

The meeting of his Majesty the Emperor and the King with his Majesty the Emperor of Russia was of a particularly cordial character and constituted a fresh proof of the relations of friendship which have united the two rulers for many years.

The exchange of views which on this occasion took place between the statesmen who accompanied their Majesties exhibited afresh the firm resolve to maintain the time-honoured traditions which exist between the two countries.

The political conversations, which extended to all questions of the day, strengthened on both sides the conviction that it still remains of the highest importance for the interests of the two neighbour Empires and of the general peace to maintain the mutual contact (Fühlungnahme), based upon reciprocal confidence.

There followed a paragraph to which *The Times* attached importance. It was often recalled in the controversies of the ensuing months. *The Times* claimed that the German *communiqué* recognized the existing grouping and hence was equivalent to recognizing a new European equilibrium. The relevant paragraph ran:

There could be no question either of new agreements (Abmachungen), because there was no particular occasion for them, or of producing alterations of any kind in the grouping of the European Powers, the value of which for the maintenance of equilibrium and of peace has already been proved (deren Wert für die Aufrechterhaltung des Gleichgewichts und des Friedens sich bereits erprobt hat). The meeting at Port Baltic can, therefore, on all sides and with perfect right be welcomed with satisfaction, for while, on the one hand, it testifies to the firm and lasting friendship between Germany and Russia, it constitutes, on the other hand, an eloquent expression of the pacific principles (Grundrichtungen) which decide in equal degree the policy of both Empires.

It was certainly striking that the Port Baltic conversations should have been conducted without question of a new agreement, which could mean only the detachment of Russia from the

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entente. The acceptance, which immediately followed, of the proved value for the maintenance of peace of the existing grouping of the Powers, which there was no occasion to alter, was even more so. It was disappointing that the Berlin Correspondent should have found in the Norddeutsche Zeitung a comment to the effect that the value of the conversations consisted in the fact that the desire to maintain permanent peace between Germany and Russia had been strengthened. The journal being semi-official, Mackenzie, the Correspondent, added his own comment that it had not done justice to the communiqué. It was one

in which Germany proclaims for, so far as I am aware, the first time that the present grouping of the European Powers does not deserve to be altered, because its value for the maintenance of the balance of power and of peace has been proved. If language means anything, this language means that the Triple Entente is, at last, ebenbürtig, and that Germany reaffirms, in the teeth of many German diplomatists, the principle of the balance of power in Europe, her only concern being to round off the rough corners and to foster good relations between the two groups which hold the scales.

Mackenzie, as a good successor to Saunders, thought it necessary to point out that as German public opinion had so long been indoctrinated with the belief that the entente was a fiction where Russia was concerned, and a conspiracy where France was concerned, it could not be taken for granted that the communiqué was backed by what passed for public opinion in Germany. Also the unofficial political prophets in Germany were disinclined to commit themselves. This was significant. The true explanation of the Port Baltic acceptance of the Group System, i.e., that both groups were suffering from strain, and both groups were unprepared for war, was not then as obvious as it is to the present day historian. Even so, it rapidly became clear that the Baltic agreement and the new European equilibrium in which The Times trusted, might at any moment be ruptured in a portion of the Continent unfamiliar and uninteresting to most Englishmen. The Times was by no means inadequately represented in the Balkans.

# XXIII

# BALKAN DANGERS

N important step in the reorganization of the Foreign Department by Wallace<sup>1</sup> had been the appointment in 1895 A of a permanent whole-time correspondent to the Balkan Peninsula. Formerly, the rule had been that the territory should be the responsibility of the Vienna Correspondent, who controlled the special writers sent out to cover wars and revolutions and supervised the local agents who contributed the day-to-day news. These sources, supplemented by the Constantinople Correspondent and the news agencies, proved adequate as long as Turkey was still supreme in the Balkans. But when Rumania. Serbia, and Bulgaria struggled to liberate themselves from the Sultan's yoke and slowly won their independence, the value of these countries as news-centres increased. However weak in themselves they exerted a strong, if indirect, influence upon the diplomacy of the Great Powers signatory to the Treaty of Berlin. The appointment of a full-time correspondent in the Balkans was abundantly justified on the facts, but it was not cordially greeted by the Manager, who never admitted that anybody in Britain had the slightest interest in the Balkans.

James David Bourchier began his career as a schoolmaster and ended it as a Bulgarian national hero. The links between the schoolmaster and the hero were physical infirmity and Printing House Square. Deafness obliged him in 1888 to leave Eton (he had been some years previously at Wellington) and to consult an aurist in the Austrian Capital. There he met The Times Vienna Correspondent, a fellow Etonian, Brinsley Richards, who sent him on a trial mission to Bulgaria and Rumania. Bourchier was well fitted for the work. A Southern Irishman of ancient family, born in County Limerick in 1850, he had won distinction as a classical scholar at Trinity College, Dublin, and King's College, Cambridge. Equally familiar with ancient Greece and medieval Byzantium, and resentful of the blight which five centuries of Turkish rule had brought upon the lands between the Euxine and the Aegean, he sympathized warmly with the struggles of the Balkan peoples, especially of the Bulgars and Macedonian Greeks, for complete freedom from

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter VI.

Ottoman overlordship. Bourchier did so well that *The Times* presently invited him to go to Bulgaria, where the new ruler, Prince (later King) Ferdinand, was in the process of settling in. Bourchier arrived at Trnovo, the old capital, to find that the Prince was expected there for Easter. He joined the Royal suite and accompanied Ferdinand for the remainder of his first tour through his new domain. The Prince honoured Bourchier with his friendship, often sought his advice, and made many excursions with him. He also received great kindness from Ferdinand's mother, Princess Clementine, who was similarly afflicted with deafness.

Ferdinand certainly spared no pains to gain Bourchier's He would invite him to the Royal estate at Euxinograd where, in the solitude of immense gardens, he would shout selected State secrets into Bourchier's tympanum. Nor did Ferdinand alone indulge in this exhausting vocal exercise. Venizelos and other Balkan statesmen practised it, for Bourchier's deafness gradually became a feature of Balkan political life, an obstacle to be got over, not a reason for shunning him. A diplomat was wont to declare that whenever a great noise was heard in the Balkans it was either Bourchier telling a State secret to a Prime Minister, or a Prime Minister telling a State secret to Bourchier. To the shiftiness of Ferdinand's character Bourchier was never blind; nor did Ferdinand make any secret of his policy. Cynicism was a matter of principle with him. After the abduction and abdication of Alexander of Battenberg. and the choice of Ferdinand to succeed him. Ferdinand once said to Chirol: "You were, I believe, very intimate with my unfortunate predecessor?" When Chirol confessed his admiration for Alexander "although his qualities were rather those of the heart than of the head," Ferdinand rejoined, "Yes! Yes! Nobody will ever address such a reproach to me!" The exchange was no surprise to Bourchier, who had investigated political murders in Bulgaria in addition to that of Stambolov: nor would it have surprised him to hear what Ferdinand presently said to Colonel Sir Frederick Ponsonby, aide-de-camp to King Edward VII: "When I went to Bulgaria I made up my mind that if there were to be assassinations I should be on the side of the assassins."

Soon Bourchier numbered among his acquaintance every prominent Balkan leader and statesman. King George of Greece, King Carol I of Rumania, as well as the Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria received him willingly. Eleftherios Venizelos, the Cretan leader, became his devoted friend. All



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appreciated his integrity—though some, like Ferdinand of Bulgaria, sought to play upon his sense of pride in his own, very real, importance, a sense which they mistook for personal vanity. He had reason to be proud of his work. No hardship or risk deterred him. With a bug-proof and mosquito-proof sleeping-bag of his own contrivance he "roughed it" indefatigably. To Bourchier it was natural to be a gallant gentleman. During his first three years abroad, he travelled at will through the Balkans, Constantinople and Crete. He sent vivid occasional contributions to *The Times* without being under an obligation.

When the Vienna Correspondent, Richards, died suddenly on April 5, 1892, and Lavino was appointed his successor, Bourchier was offered a permanent position if he would take charge of Rumania, Bulgaria and Greece with headquarters in Sofia. with the responsibility, also, of keeping "Lavino generally informed as well as ourselves and to work with him." Bourchier's career was now established on a firm basis. He received the usual managerial warnings to keep expenses low, and was discouraged from expecting a deputy, since "as a rule the British public only care for one thing at once and two things in the Balkans would be more than they could stand." Bourchier, however, was allowed to make use of various assistants for short periods. including H. A. Gwynne, his agent at Bucharest-Bell never forgave him for leaving The Times to go to Reuters. D. G. Hogarth of Magdalen College, Oxford, was another of Bourchier's temporary assistants. Bourchier tended at first to spend his time in Greece and Bulgaria. During this period he learnt their languages thoroughly but Wallace, who liked him, was forced to complain that he was not mobile enough. A more serious fault was the habit of ignoring the virtue, priceless in a correspondent, of punctuality and of delaying copy until the very last moment. Wallace wrote to him on June 8, 1892:

I must request you to refrain from "cutting it too fine" in the matter of dispatching your telegrams from Sofia—a practice akin to your inveterate habit of "cutting it too fine" in the matter of keeping engagements. Some of your indulgent friends may perhaps pardon you your unpunctuality in social engagements, but in your duties as correspondent you must really endeavour to reform if you do not want to get into trouble.

Wallace's warning neither saved the correspondent from a severe rebuke from Bell nor altogether cured him of the vice. But in other respects his work was admired and the man himself supported. Bourchier naturally became absorbed in the progress of the new régime in Bulgaria. It soon became evident that

Ferdinand wanted Russia's friendship and chafed at the policy pursued by his Russophobe Prime Minister, Stambolov, who was out-manoeuvred and forced to resign in May, 1894. He fiercely attacked the Government in newspaper interviews and otherwise showed himself the bitter enemy of the Russophile Prince Ferdinand. He thereby earned a warning that his life was in danger. Upon this he tried to leave the country on the pretext of securing medical treatment, but was refused a passport. Bourchier went to see him in Sofia on the afternoon of July 15. 1895. They had a long conversation after which Stambolov went on to the Union Club to play cards. Later the same evening Bourchier telegraphed that Stambolov had been attacked on his way home and badly wounded. In the circumstances the correspondent made it his business to be present at the operation when Stambolov's hands were amputated. Secondly, Stambolov's servant. Guntcho, who had been on the box of the carriage during the attack, was detained in hospital incomunicado. Bourchier persuaded the Prime Minister to permit him to visit the man. and was able to send The Times an eye-witness account of the Bourchier warned the Bulgarian Government that "whatever happens, a heavy responsibility rests with those who refused him permission to leave the country, and who, detaining him here like a prisoner, neglected the measures necessary to ensure his safety." Stambolov died, after intense suffering, on July 18, 1895. The Times next day condemned the cynicism of the official Bulgarian Press towards the murder and ranked the dead man as "the one great man whom Bulgaria has produced." Bourchier's obituary of the dead statesman refused to judge him by the standards of civilized Europe—Bulgaria was an Oriental country and "in Oriental lands the people will always acquiesce in a strong Government." His appreciation of Stambolov's greatness, and his disgust at the scenes of violence which marked his funeral were resented. Prince Ferdinand withdrew his friendship and the two men were never again on cordial terms. Bourchier was formally appointed "Our Own Correspondent" at this time. His first dispatch, thus headed, was printed on July 12, 1895.

The removal of Stambolov from the scene strengthened Ferdinand's determination to ingratiate himself with the Czar. During the autumn of 1895 it became evident that Russia and Bulgaria were drawing closer together. Bourchier considered that while Russia might not acknowledge Prince Ferdinand publicly as the lawful ruler of Bulgaria, some sort of a secret alliance was possible: "Bulgaria might attach herself to the Franco-Russian alliance, to which her excellent army could

## FERDINAND STRENGTHENS HIS POSITION

render welcome aid in the great Armageddon of the future."1 The correspondent was deeply impressed by the steady improvement in Bulgarian prosperity under Ferdinand's guidance, despite the Prince's lack of personal qualities likely to appeal to a martial nation. His main conviction, that the complete emancipation of the Balkans could only come through the prowess of Bulgarian arms, was not to be borne out by events. Bourchier, however, was by no means alone in this conviction. On the contrary, it was widely shared and was eminently reasonable on the basis of the estimate of the relative strength of Serbia and the Southern Slavs, of the Greeks, and of the Turks. But Ferdinand saw a way of improving his position at home and abroad without entangling his country in secret military alliances. His first child, Boris, born in January, 1894, had received his baptism in the Catholic Church.<sup>2</sup> Now, two years later, on February 4, 1896. Ferdinand announced to the Sobranye that he was prepared to make the painful sacrifice of permitting Boris to be received into the national, i.e., Orthodox Church. The conversion outraged the feelings of the child's relatives and was regarded with particular aversion by the Emperor Francis Joseph; but there was public rejoicing in Bulgaria, the Czar condescended to be a godparent, and the Sultan promised that as soon as the unanimous consent of the six Great Powers was received, the Porte would recognize Ferdinand as the ruler of Bulgaria. To The Times the conversion symbolized a change of policy on the part of the young Czar Nicholas II and Prince Lobanof in the direction of Panslavism. The new understanding between Czar and Sultan was viewed as a diplomatic success gained at the expense of England, and a result of English interference on behalf of the Armenians. Ferdinand was duly rewarded. In March, 1896, having been invested by the Sultan as his vassal, he set out on a glorious tour to St. Petersburg, Paris, Berlin, and Belgrade. He was not received in Vienna until two years later.

The prestige of Ferdinand was not heightened in Europe by the tacit encouragement he gave to the Macedonian movement, which began to be active in Bulgaria in May, 1894, shortly after the fall of Stambolov, and of which so much was to be heard in after years. From the movement's headquarters in Sofia, meetings were organized throughout the country and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Times, September 13, 1895, special article on Russia and Bulgaria.

<sup>2</sup> The Bulgarian Constitution stipulated that the Crown Prince must be brought up in the Orthodox faith, although Ferdinand himself had been allowed to remain a Catholic. When Ferdinand married the Catholic Princess Marie-Louise of Bourbon-Parma—an alliance calculated to improve the status of the Princely House—Stambolov had the Constitution amended to allow their children to be bred in the faith of their parents

subscriptions raised for the equipment of armed bands. The professed and high-sounding aim was to obtain for the Macedonian Christians the autonomy stipulated for them in the Treaty of Berlin. The methods were, however, extreme: Moslems on either side of the Macedonian border were terrorized in order to provoke Turkish retaliation on their Christian subjects and thus to attract the attention of all Europe to the Macedonian question. The sympathies of Bourchier were not on the side of the Turks, nor had Mackenzie Wallace any partiality towards them. When Wallace sent him to Constantinople for a short time in 1895 complaints from the Turkish authorities about his telegrams were soon received. But Bourchier's sense of justice was so outraged by the sight of the "orderly, peaceable and industrious Mohammedan population" being forced to leave their homes in the border districts of Bulgaria that he once more found himself in conflict with the Government. A telegram to The Times, printed on August 7, 1895, concerning the desperate struggle of the Macedonian bands included the statement that "the members of the defeated bands are said to be revenging themselves on Mohammedan subjects of Bulgaria, twelve of whom, I learn from an authoritative source, have been killed." He continued on August 14, 1895:

According to information derived from an official Turkish source the Mahomedan village of Dospat, across the Turkish frontier, was attacked before dawn on Saturday morning by a band of 400 or 500 Bulgarians, led by three officers of the reserve. The village was set on fire, and the inhabitants, as they rushed from their houses, were slaughtered indiscriminately. It is stated that several hundred were killed. The band subsequently withdrew across the frontier.

In consequence of this report, the British Government made representations to the Bulgarian Government, urging them to prevent the passage of these bands of marauders. The Porte also took the opportunity to address complaints to the Great Powers and to the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Natchovitch. The latter complained bitterly to Mr. C. N. E. Eliot, acting British Diplomatic Agent in Sofia. Natchovitch insinuated that Bourchier had been the victim of false information and invited him

to proceed to the scene of the crime which he [had] reported to London, to make as rigorous an enquiry as he pleases, in order to

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;One thing, however, you ought to bear in mind; if you do your duty you will not satisfy the Palace. Already I have received complaints about your telegrams and I have replied that I have full confidence in your judgment and impartiality. To this I have added that I do not believe any man with the independence of judgment requisite in a Times correspondent can possibly satisfy the authorities. Such is the result of my six years' experience in Constantinople." (Mackenzie Wallace to Bourchier in Constantinople, July 3, 1895.)

#### BOURCHIER AND THE DOSPAT MASSACRE

discover the names of the victims and to communicate them to the Government, since our civil, military and judicial authorities who have been simultaneously entrusted with this task have not been able to find any trace of those crimes. Mr. Bourchier shall travel at the expense of the Bulgarian Government and shall be furnished with open letters placing all the above-mentioned authorities at his complete disposal for the purpose of facilitating his investigations. I hope that Mr. Bourchier will accept this proposal with the more eagerness since his own honour and that of *The Times* are involved in this matter. (August 31, 1895.)

The leading article of the same date preferred to express complete confidence in Bourchier's reports and to consider the Bulgarian Government's action a reprisal for the criticism to which it had recently been subjected. The paper was hardly surprised that the authorities, who failed to trace Stambolov's assassins in the heart of the Capital, had heard of no crimes in Macedonia. Printing House Square regarded the events seriously. Bourchier had gone off on his own account in August to investigate the Dospat massacre and found the burnt and ruined village looking like "Sodom and Gomorrah after fire and brimstone," but was only able to prove the death of 41 victims. The Bulgarian Government then asserted that Bourchier's "pretended enquiry" at Dospat, which was over the border in Turkish territory, implied criticism of their denial of terrorism within the Bulgarian frontiers; and the fact that the Agence Balcanique, the official telegraphic agency of the Bulgarian Government, declared that in recent times only two Turks had been killed in the principality. A correspondence conducted between Natchovitch, Bourchier, and Printing House Square was acrimonious—the Bulgarian Foreign Minister asserting that Bourchier was misleading The Times. The paper replied with scathing comments on Bulgarian politics. The controversy grew to such proportions that the paper felt compelled to re-examine the facts, so far as they could be established. Bell wrote to Bourchier on October 8, 1895:

This is the important matter. We must either prove it or withdraw it. Please see to it at once. We would rather you did it yourself, but in case of need would send out someone from here. Mr. Walter is very insistent that we either prove or withdraw.

Wallace's opinion was that Bourchier had a good case and he advised him, in spite of the irritating provocation he had received, to write his report "in a calm, impartial spirit and in a simple, matter-of-fact style." The correspondent devoted eleven weeks to a most painstaking investigation in the neighbourhood of

Varna, Shumla and Razgrad, where every difficulty was placed in his way by the authorities. Both Turkish and Bulgarian peasants were persuaded that Bourchier was an enemy agent or even an Armenian agitator and those who assisted him were threatened with death or ruin. But Bourchier, ill as he was with fever and jaundice, filled many notebooks with evidence taken down directly from frightened peasants and he continued at the task until Wallace instructed him on November 24 to come home and write his report. Bell, meanwhile, complained bitterly of the correspondent's method of sending in by driblets his accounts for the expenses incurred in this "interminable enquiry." There was no question of the Bulgarian Government being allowed to pay any share of the expense. The report was duly forwarded to the British Foreign Office and published in The Times on January 7 and 15, 1896. Bourchier easily established the truth of his statement that many more than twelve Mohammedan subjects of Prince Ferdinand had been murdered by Bulgarian terrorists on Bulgarian territory, but the chief value of the report lay in its impartial exposure of the disorderly conditions tolerated by the Bulgarian Government on its frontier. It was an abiding grief to the correspondent that the exposure was overlooked during the turmoil caused by the Kaiser's telegram to Kruger. Bourchier's vindication of himself and his championship of the Moslems made him so unpopular in Sofia that it was thought advisable in P.H.S. to give him a change. Bell suggested Peking, but the correspondent was unwilling to throw away the knowledge gained in his eight years' close study of the Near Eastern question. Also, as a lifelong enthusiast for classical scholarship, his interest in South and South-East Europe was too deep. Bourchier's keen interest in antiquity led him to pay regular visits to the British School at Athens, to write on their excavations and to induce the greatest experts to contribute letters to The Times on the subject of classical antiquities.1 The revival of the Olympic Games in April, 1896, gave Bell an opportunity to send Bourchier to Athens. He arrived there in time for the funeral of a great personal friend, M. Tricoupis, whom The Times called "the greatest statesman that modern Greece has produced." An insurrection in Crete next month made Bourchier's presence in Greece inevitable.

Crete, like many other misgoverned portions of the Turkish Empire, had been promised substantial reforms in 1878. But the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Replying to Bell on February 2, 1896, Bourchier wrote: "I have always been glad to think that *The Times* attaches more importance to questions of scholarship and art than any other newspaper, and perhaps I may say that, in my own case, work in this field—which is done *con amore*—is likely to be my best."

#### INSURRECTIONS IN CRETE

old Turkish mismanagement, corruption and intolerance prevailed. The population were of common Greek stock, but of mixed religious belief. The coastal towns were mainly inhabited by Mohammedan converts, while the hinterland remained Christian. The Christians predominated, but in May, 1896, Moslem riots in Canea drove thousands of refugees to the Piraeus and inflamed Greek opinion. Foreign warships were ordered to Cretan waters, and among the British naval units was the Hood in which Bourchier was able to obtain passage from Athens to Canea.1 But Canea proved too dangerous for his headquarters and the Captain of the Hood allowed him to remain on board for several months. The crisis was over by September, and Bourchier accompanied R. A. H. Bickford Smith, the Commissioner of the Cretan Relief Committee, on a tour of the country.<sup>2</sup> As the International Commission delayed the carrying out of the agreed reforms, open rioting began again in February, 1897. The rebels, with Greek encouragement, proclaimed their union with the motherland. The prospect of Greek intervention against Turkey created a grave situation for the Powers. George, King of the Hellenes, was known to be a moderate-minded ruler but, as a foreigner, he could hardly restrain the pan-hellenism of his subjects, and a national campaign to enlarge Greece at the expense of Turkey drove the Government to warlike measures. On February 10, 1897, Prince George sailed for Crete with a Greek flotilla. Immediately, Bourchier went to Canea. He now encountered difficulty in getting the news. The admirals of the international fleet had little to give and, while keeping watch, the consuls of the Great Powers who had signed the Treaty of Berlin were left uninformed of the diplomatic moves in Constantinople and Athens. Kalapothakis, Bourchier's assistant in Athens, a resourceful Greek, had orders to keep him posted with events. but he was carried away by national feeling and crossed with the Greek Army to Crete. Wallace still remained doubtful about the prospect of war and as he would not advise Bell to send out a Military Correspondent, Bourchier was forced to return to Athens. Before leaving, he persuaded Bickford Smith to act for him in Canea, and enrolled students of the British School as Special Correspondents.

At home it was widely felt that the union of Crete with Greece would in the long run prove irresistible, but *The Times* supported

<sup>1</sup> His brother William, later Dean of Cashel, was the chaplain.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Christian deputies to the Cretan National Assembly voted Bourchier their thanks in August, 1896, for helping to promote a favourable agreement with Turkey. He also received an address of thanksgiving from the General Revolutionary Assembly of Cretans, dated Vamos, September 2, 1896.

the Government view that the Powers were committed to preserving the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Any action, therefore, must be concerted action; isolated interference on the part of one Power would probably lead to European war. Meanwhile the Greeks felt encouraged by the demonstrations of the English Radical and the Irish parties. Public meetings provoked what *The Times* called "a debauch of silly and inflammatory rhetoric." Simultaneously in Crete, Christians and Moslems went on murdering and besieging each other while the Sultan held his hand and watched the European concert proving unequal to the occasion. Germany, still smarting under Greece's treatment of her creditors, proposed a joint blockade of the Piraeus, to which Lord Salisbury could not agree, knowing that popular agitation in England would demand a similar blockade of Turkey. It soon became evident that the Greeks attached more importance to Thessaly and Macedonia than to Crete, and that they were prolonging their intervention in Crete mainly to strengthen their national bargaining power. Turkey finally lost patience and declared war on April 17, 1897. The struggle was short and decisive. The Greeks had some initial success in Epirus but were heavily defeated in Thessaly and had to retreat to Pharsalia. All this time Bourchier, who supervised the arrangements for newsgetting on the Greek side, was working under severe handicaps. As he wrote to Bell on April 4, 1897, instead of writing he had to devote a great deal of his time to looking after a whole family of amateur correspondents. They wrote and telegraphed him almost hourly on every conceivable subject, from the buying of horses and bicycles to the arranging of credits at telegraph stations all over the Peninsula. Things were not helped by Bourchier's natural incapacity for dealing with finance. And, as a matter of course, they quarrelled with each other. Bickford Smith, too, who sent vivid dispatches from Canea and was the only correspondent present at the relief of Kandanos, worried Bourchier by taking sides against the admirals of the international fleet. His dispatches were strongly philhellenic and gave the impression that the admirals were protecting the Turks. Ernest Bennett, a Fellow of Hertford College, who was invited to send in contributions from Crete, came to England on the sudden death of his father and complained to Bell that Bickford Smith had suppressed his telegrams in order to give a more favourable picture of the Greek cause. Upon this, the Manager, whose sympathies were not engaged by the Greeks, sent Wallace out to investigate these charges. He complained to Bourchier that if Bickford Smith had been

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suppressing news in this way The Times was placed in a most ridiculous position, for "we have become notorious for publishing philhellenic views from Crete quite contrary to our own." Bell favoured Bourchier with a long lecture on the heinousness of misleading the public, even from a high motive, for "a man is not justified in picking a pocket because he intends to devote the proceeds to building a church." Knight, the experienced War Correspondent, was dispatched to the scene and Clive Bigham went to the Turkish Army. On the whole the Turkish side was reported better than the Greek, because the Greek censorship was more arbitrary. For instance, Bourchier was sometimes beaten by the Daily Chronicle because the censors freely passed that journal's invariably favourable wires unread, but were curious to learn and to pass on to other Greek officials The Times Correspondent's independent views. The fighting was over by the beginning of May. The result was a tribute to the German officers who had overhauled the Turkish Army, including the working of military railways and rapid mobilization. The Times, though paying a tribute to the bravery of the Greek soldiers, advised their Government to ask the Powers to mediate with Turkey:

It is all nonsense to talk of the "humiliation" which this proposal is said to involve for Greece, and of the terrible consequences of driving the nation to "desperation." [A view expressed by Bourchier.] Nothing that the majority of the Powers will assent to is likely to be of a character to drive any reasonable nation to desperation. (10 May, 1897.)

This turned out to be an optimistic view. Negotiations for a settlement strained the concert of Europe for Turkey put forward very harsh terms, including a demand for an indemnity of 10 million pounds. The Times published, on May 14, 1897, a bitter communication from H. M. Hyndman, suggesting that the hundred M.P.s who had egged the Greeks on to war and ruin should now subscribe a third of the indemnity. The thorny Cretan problem was left unsettled; Prince George of Greece was appointed High Commissioner for three years, under the suzerainty of the Sultan; Greece, bankrupt and weakened. surrendered control of her finances to an International Commission. At the end of the year the Sultan, thus strengthened, became more intransigent. The paper remarked that "the concert of Europe, though real enough to prevent war among its own members, is not single-minded enough to impose its will upon Turkey." Bell, on the whole, considered that Bourchier, with Wallace's help at the end, had brought them fairly well through the affair, but he was so exasperated by

Bourchier's book-keeping<sup>1</sup> that he transferred his nephew, Thorburn Bell, from Berlin to Athens, to take charge of the office work.

Bourchier's journey undertaken in the following year to study Montenegro, Bosnia, and the Herzegovina, the only part of his province which he had not yet visited, was interrupted by an office instruction to follow the Emperor William on his tour in Palestine. The trip proved disappointing. He wrote to the Manager on November 11, 1898, when back at Athens: "English correspondents especially were made to feel that their presence was not desired and everything was done to keep them out of sight and to exclude them from participation in what was going on." Bourchier, stubbornly pro-Bulgar, familiar with the history and language of the country, now chose to make Sofia his permanent headquarters. He was less familiar with Serbia and the Serbians perhaps because the country, nominally independent since 1877, was mainly an arena of intrigue and counterintrigue between Russian and Austro-Hungarian agents. Moreover the defeat in 1897 of the Greek Army at the hands of the Turks led Bourchier to put his faith increasingly in the Bulgars in spite of the unheroic qualities of Prince Alexander's cunning successor, Ferdinand of Coburg. The correspondent may have thought that where Alexander's uncalculating bravery had failed. Ferdinand's cynical and cowardly cleverness might succeed. But if the remnant of Turkish power was widely recognized as a conspicuous anomaly there was still no evidence that the final liquidation of Ottoman power in Europe would usher in an era of Balkan peace. The Macedonian question lay in the background; so too the Southern Slav question.

In Mackenzie Wallace's period as head of the Foreign Department Bourchier's relations with the office were tranquil. Wallace not only appreciated Bourchier's qualities as a correspondent but liked him personally. He had seen enough, while representing *The Times* in Constantinople, of Turkish corruption and misrule to sympathize with Bourchier's deep resentment against the treatment meted out to the Christian populations left in the Ottoman Empire. But when Chirol succeeded Wallace, Bourchier at once found himself in an entirely different atmosphere and, not long afterwards, in conflict with the office policy. The new head of the Foreign Depart-

<sup>1</sup> A long series of letters from Bell scold Bourchier for his unbusiness-like ways. The Manager's tone is sometimes angry, sometimes almost admiring. Bourchier's accounts, made out in his beautifully fine hand, usually arrived late or incomplete. His prize piece in this genre was to send on January 30, 1904, a claim for two telegrams dispatched in 1893 and 1894. He lost the keys of his drawers, mislaid his code-book and numerous other small belongings, as is proved by his diary references.

## CHIROL AND BOURCHIER AT LOGGERHEADS

ment had extensive, first-hand knowledge of the Moslem question, and not only understood the Near East as a whole, but viewed events there simply and solely in the light of their repercussion, if any, on our interests in Egypt and India. He fully shared the fears of European politicians as to the effect, anticipated as catastrophic, of disturbing the *status quo* in the Balkans. It was, therefore, out of the question to give editorial support to Bourchier's conviction that the Turk must be driven from Europe. The Balkans Correspondent was told point-blank that *The Times* refused to run another crusade against Turkey.

Chirol, moreover, found Bourchier so far personally unsympathetic as to visit upon him sarcastic rebukes concerning his unpunctuality. In April, 1907, Chirol considered that Bourchier compromised the reputation of the paper by delaying an article reviewing the causes of the rising in Moldavia. The Times, Chirol expostulated, went to the expense of maintaining a regular correspondent in the Balkans, and yet suffered the humiliation of being forestalled by the Morning Post, which published an excellent article from its occasional correspondent, Spenser Wilkinson. Meanwhile Bell, declaring that nobody took the slightest interest in the Balkans, decided that it was a waste of money to keep Bourchier there. The Manager, in fact, knowing himself to be forced to keep the journal's expenses as low as possible, had come to loathe the arrival of Bourchier's "lectures" on Crete, wired at shillings per word instead of being posted for twopence halfpenny and only "explaining the insignificant details of a rumpus in one small Turkish island." What was taken seriously in the Orient was not necessarily viewed gravely in Printing House Square. Bell once pulled out his tables and, relishing the chance of ridiculing Bourchier's chronic inability to count, informed him that:

An average copy of *The Times* contains about 160,000 words, and if you send us 1,400 words on Crete you are proposing to take up 1/115th of our space for that insignificant island, whose entire population is only 1/136th of even the British Isles and 1/540th of the British Empire. . . . These mathematical calculations will, I know, be insuperably difficult to your Cambridge mind, but the net result may be intelligible—we really must have shorter telegrams.<sup>1</sup>

Bourchier appeared to accept Bell's rebukes in better part than Chirol's subtler reprimands, but he disliked the Manager's bantering tone regarding Balkan affairs. He was not prepared to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> When Bourchier, on another occasion, erred in the same way with his wired messages from Greece, Bell counselled him to avoid useless words, ending his advice: "and I am tempted to say that if you cannot be laconic you can at least avoid being Ionic."

be humorous about Turkish outrages, and despite their long acquaintance Bell and Bourchier never became intimate. The long, amusing letters, full of political comment and topical anecdote, that he sent to some of his staff, notably Steed, never came Bourchier's way.

When the correspondent came home on his annual leave in 1907 he was surprised by the suggestion that "pending the revival of interest in the Balkans" he should represent The Times somewhere else. Portugal, for instance. The bare idea of leaving the Balkans was such a shock to Bourchier that he appealed to Arthur Walter against this threat to remove him from the place where he felt his vocation lay. The appeal to Caesar did not smooth Bourchier's relations with his chiefs. Chirol accused him of misrepresenting him to Walter, and relations between them became so unfriendly that Bourchier returned to his post in the Peninsula without paying a farewell call to Printing House Square. Only when he was back in the Balkans did he realize that he had annoyed Bell and offended Chirol, with the result that neither of them was inclined to view his failings with a lenient eye. As it happened, "the revival of interest in the Balkans" came sooner than the office expected.

The Young Turk Revolution of July, 1908, which was hailed in Europe as the salvation of Turkey, violently upset all the Balkan States and their far more powerful neighbours. It was obvious to the Great Powers that if the decline of Turkey were arrested by the new régime, the prospect of a share-out of her Balkan territory would be indefinitely postponed. The two leading Slav States in the Balkans were sharply divided on the question of the future of Macedonia. Bulgaria, wishing to make the Macedonian question entirely Bulgarian, was bound by the Macedonian Committee to support Macedonian autonomy; while Serbia, opposing the formation of a separate Macedonian state, which would eventually unite with Bulgaria on the pattern of Eastern Rumelia, hoped to receive her share of Slav territory on the break-up of the Ottoman Empire.

Ferdinand of Bulgaria, still a vassal of the Sultan, spent the autumn of 1908 in Austria-Hungary, where he delicately exacerbated the relations between Bulgaria and Turkey. There were many indications that he was preparing the way for a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bourchier was also engrossed in the articles on the Balkan States which he was writing for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Bell wrote to him on July 9, 1907: "Chirol tells me that you are so busy with work for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* that you are not able to give us your services elsewhere than in the Balkan Peninsula." The Manager then offered him a choice between obeying and retaining his extra fees for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* work, or refusing and handing back the extra remuneration to *The Times*.

declaration of independence. Bourchier's correspondence from Sofia, while reflecting the prevailing uncertainty of opinion, inclined to the negative side. He wrote as late as September 28 that there was no reason to suppose that the idea was seriously entertained in responsible quarters. The country was far more excited over the railway question.¹ Steed, in Vienna, had better information. The leading article on October 2 quoted him as saying plainly that in the Capitals of Austria and of Hungary a declaration of Bulgarian independence and of the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by the Dual Monarchy was expected in the near future. The Times warned Bulgaria that she was a puppet and that the hand pulling the strings was Austria-Hungary:

We are told that Russian authoritative circles do not take the position tragically. There is no need to take it tragically, at least as yet. But we sincerely trust that they take it seriously, and that they realise how greatly they might strengthen the *entente* between Russia and England—against both which there are grumblers in both countries—by showing their determination to act with us in restraining dangerous ambitions, in whatever quarter they may emerge, within the Balkans. (September 28, 1908.)

Bulgaria's denials and disavowals were considered at Printing House Square to be on the same level as the old Turkey's had been. Whether her policy was spontaneous or inspired by Austria. it pointed to a settled plan to humiliate the Turkish Government first, with a view to plundering her later. It almost looked as though Austria wished to overwhelm the Young Turk régime by the discredit which would follow the double loss of vassal territory, and to plunge Macedonia back into chaos to prevent any further cohesion of the Slav lands. The news of Bulgaria's intentions leaked out over the week-end as has been related in a previous Chapter. Bourchier was kept in the dark, but The Times of Monday, October 5, printed the Sunday message from the Paris Correspondent to the effect that Bulgaria would next day proclaim her independence.<sup>2</sup> It was fortunate for Bourchier and for The Times that the ensuing threat to remove him did not materialize. Events of a character not to be measured by any new arrival were pending. The declaration, like the annexation, was not to be regarded merely from the point of view of the international strain likely to be caused by the Dual Monarchy's deliberate abandonment of the principle that international treaties can be modified only by the joint consent of all the signatories.

Bulgaria occupied the Eastern Rumelian sector of the Oriental Railways in September, 1908, during a strike. Her action was obviously strategic, for after the strike was settled the authorities refused to return the railway to Turkey.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For Chirol's telegram sent *en clair* rebuking Bourchier for letting down the paper, see *supra*, p. 653.

The resulting extension of Germanic power in the Balkans was more serious. A conference to revise the Treaty of Berlin must mean compensation at Turkey's expense for the swelling appetites which the Treaty had restrained for so many years. The hope was expressed that Russia would take her place beside the two undoubtedly disinterested Powers, France and England. result would be a stronger and more stable Turkey, and a spirit of closer friendship between the two Western Powers and Russia than had yet existed. That was Chirol's hope. But immediately after the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina Serbia demanded compensation from the Powers who signed the Treaty of Berlin, on the grounds that the annexation imperilled her existence as an independent State. Isvolsky had encouraged Serbia to believe that Russia would support her claims, but the conference at which they were to be put forward was never held. Isvolsky made a speech at Christmas before the Duma in which he advocated an alliance between Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Turkey, for the defence of their national and economic interests. On February 1, 1909, he induced Bulgaria to accept the Russian financial plan for settling the question of indemnities to Turkey. Next, Ferdinand was honoured by an invitation to attend the funeral of the Grand Duke Vladimir. He was even received with sovereign honours. The Times vainly recommended Austria-Hungary to grant a constitution as soon as possible to the annexed provinces and to come to some liberal economic agreement with Serbia. But there was to be no question of allowing any small nation in the Balkans to upset the status quo. The leading article of February 1, 1909, pointed out that

The minor Balkan States have not, perhaps, altogether realized the change in European opinion which has been caused by the Turkish revolution, and the effects of that change, in the event of a struggle between any of them and Turkey. In the past they have been able to make war upon Turkey "with limited liability." If they gained any advantage they could be sure of retaining it. If they were beaten they could be equally sure that the Great Powers would intervene to save them from the law of the conqueror. It is high time that they should understand that those days are over. Turkey now enjoys the sympathies of Europe, and if any other Balkan State wantonly forces a war upon her and is defeated in it, that State must expect to bear the full consequences of defeat.

Aehrenthal's agreement with Turkey, by which Austria-Hungary renounced all claims to the Sanjak of Novi Bazar and paid the Ottoman Government an indemnity in return for Turkish recognition of the annexation, drew from *The Times* the expression of hope<sup>1</sup> that Russia would now find a way of

<sup>1</sup> See p. 627, supra.

coming to terms with the Dual Monarchy; but it was never suggested that she should, or would, accept humiliating proposals. But when, on March 24, the matter was suddenly taken out of Aehrenthal's hands by the German Ambassador at St. Petersburg informing Isvolsky that if Russia declared war on Austria she would also have to fight Germany, Russia again had no choice but to abandon Serbia. She was, in fact, humiliated, as the previous Chapter has explained. Austria's obvious determination to press for a policy of separate advantage in the Balkans, independently of Russia and of the concert of Europe, forced Serbia to face the fact that she might be the next State to be absorbed into the Dual Monarchy. Chirol,1 during the annexation crisis, had suggested that Serbia's best safeguard would be found in the creation of a defensive Serbo-Balkan League. It might at least prevent a sudden invasion. But so long as Austria, fearful of the effect of a strong Serbia upon her own Slav subjects, felt bound to sow discord between the Balkan States, the position would remain grave; also, Russia wished to bring the Slav States together, under her hegemony, into a Balkan League which, by eventually including Turkey, would stop the spread of German influence in the Near East. Other circumstances favoured a league of Balkan States.<sup>2</sup> Britain, fearing that a Balkan alliance would alarm Turkey and make her turn to Austria, favoured an entente, rather than a treaty, between Serbia and Bulgaria. The Times, in approving Russia's policy of consolidating friendly relations between Bulgaria and Turkey and the other Balkan States, did not take the view, held in Vienna and Constantinople, that Russia might be attempting a policy of adventure in the Balkans. The leading article of March 19, 1910, thus essayed to dissipate Turk suspicions:

They do not understand the leading principles of her [Russia's] present policy in the Balkans, or perceive that the maintenance of good relations between Turkey and her Slav neighbours is essential to its ultimate success. She desires, no doubt, to increase her credit

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The European Crisis IV—Serbia and Bulgaria," in The Times of November 25, 1908.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> A secret agreement of 1904 between Serbia and Bulgaria foreshadowed the Balkan League. In July, 1905, it was followed by a commercial agreement, also kept secret, which almost amounted to a customs union. In the following December the existence of the commercial agreement was revealed by a Bulgarian newspaper, upon which there was an immediate outery in Vienna, where it was appreciated that Serbia had been showing signs of growing independence of Austrian markets. Aehrenthal then demanded that the agreement should be modified beyond recognition and, to enforce his proposals, closed the Hungarian frontier to Serbian livestock. A leading article in *The Times* on February 9, 1906, explained that if the action of Austria-Hungary seemed overbearing and her demands on Serbia hardly compatible with the dignity of a Sovereign State, it was because the Dual Monarchy felt anxious regarding Serbian nationalist aspirations in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Serbia was forced to submit to Austria and her relations with Bulgaria deteriorated on account of their conflicting ambitions in Macedonia.

with the Slav States, but she knows that she cannot accomplish this object should the status quo in the Balkans be violently disturbed.

The first moves towards an alliance between Serbia and Bulgaria were made soon after Hartwig, the Russian Ambassador, arrived in Belgrade in the autumn of 1909. Isvolsky discussed the idea with Milovanovich, the Serbian Prime Minister, when he and King Peter visited St. Petersburg in March, 1910. The reason why the negotiations hung fire was thus explained by Bourchier:

The aims of Serbia were practically identical with those of Russia; it was hoped to bring about a Slav combination in the Balkans destined to checkmate the policy of Austria, to obstruct her dreaded advance towards Salonika, and eventually to effect the union of the Serb race. The Bulgarian programme, avowed or unavowed, was somewhat different; there was the same dread of Austrian encroachment, but the Turk was the real enemy; the heart of the nation was with its oppressed kindred in Macedonia and its desire was to achieve their liberation.<sup>1</sup>

Ferdinand, fearing that the alliance might hinder Bulgaria's plans in Macedonia, hesitated. It was not until the Young Turks in 1910 suppressed with ruthless severity the revolt in Albania, and then undertook a brutal campaign to "Ottomanize" Macedonia, that conditions were established which made the alliance possible. The European officials had been withdrawn after the Young Turk Revolution and the Press of the world remained silent about the horrors attending the forcible disarmament of Macedonia. Deserted by Europe, the Christian races in the Balkans slowly realized that in union lay their only weapon against the Turk. It was a supreme opportunity for The Times correspondent. Bourchier's knowledge of the whole Balkan peninsula had long convinced him that the only hope of the peasants lay in persuading the national states to end their bitter rivalry. His close acquaintance with all the Balkan leaders, and his position as a personally disinterested member of another race, enabled him to play a part in the formation of the Balkan League which no other living man was so well fitted to undertake. His diary2 reveals that he and Venizelos (Greek Prime Minister since October, 1910) with whom he had been friends since 1894, discussed the question of a possible Greco-Bulgarian alliance as early as February, 1910. Bourchier spent the winter of 1910-1911 in Sofia, revolving various plans in his mind. He paid his usual spring visit to Athens

<sup>1 &</sup>quot;The Balkan League IV," in The Times of June 11, 1913.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Quoted at pp. 136-7 by Lady Grogan in The Life of J. D. Bourchier. (London, n.d.)

# BOURCHIER'S DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY

in 1911, when he and Venizelos discussed all aspects of the Balkan situation. The Greek Prime Minister told Bourchier that he had made up his mind to invoke the aid of Bulgaria to stay the horrors of Turkish persecution in Macedonia. With Bourchier he proceeded to draw up proposals for an entente between Greece and Bulgaria providing for common action in defence of the rights of the Christians in Turkey, and for an eventual defensive alliance in case of a Turkish attack on either of the contracting parties. King George of Greece approved the proposals, while the Cabinet were, for the time being, left uninformed. Bourchier undertook to deliver the proposals secretly to Sofia. His long private letters to King Ferdinand and the Prime Minister, Gueshoff, were sealed in Athens and handed over to Mr. Ralph Butler, who took them via Corfu to Steed in Vienna. The Vienna Correspondent was deep in Bourchier's confidence, and was sworn to conceal the contents from the Bulgarian Minister in Vienna. He, knowing that Steed and Gueshoff were friends, was induced by Steed to send a special courier to Sofia with the sealed package. Gueshoff opened it1 and found Bourchier's message that the Greek King and the Greek Government were anxious to arrive at an agreement with Bulgaria. Later Bourchier was given to understand that the Bulgarian Government was not opposed to an exchange of views. Notwithstanding, the matter remained at a standstill for some months while the diplomatic Ferdinand weighed the chances of being drawn by Greece into a war over Crete. Simultaneously, there were friendly conversations between Serbia and Bulgaria, but still no agreement was reached.

The situation dramatically changed when, in September, Turkey became involved in war with Italy over Libya. Nicholas of Montenegro naturally proposed a united mobilization in the Balkans. Except for Montenegro, which was almost in a constant state of mobilization, the proposal was obviously premature. But Milovanovich immediately approached Bulgaria, at a time when Gueshoff was in Western Europe. On his way back to Sofia, he had a melodramatically secret meeting in the train with Milovanovich. The two ministers agreed to reopen negotiations and to keep their talks hidden from everybody except their sovereigns and one or two members of the Cabinet. Notwithstanding, Bourchier's account of the negotiations<sup>2</sup> proves that he was a party to them. He certainly could not be unaware of the gravity and urgency of the situation. He had written from Sofia on January 12, 1912, that "never since

<sup>1</sup> The Balkan League, by I. E. Gueshoff, (John Murray, 1915.) p. 37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See The Times, June 11, 1913.

the eve of the great war of 1877 has the outlook in the Near East been more gloomy and disquieting than at the present moment. . . . The whole country from the Aegean to the Adriatic is ripe for rebellion." There was plain anarchy in Macedonia and N. Albania. He castigated the Young Turk régime1 for posing before Europe as enlightened and liberal while continuing the traditional oppression and intolerance: "It would be a mistake to suppose that even the shadow of self-government exists in European Turkey." Thus Bourchier did all he could to hurry on the plans for the League. Prince Boris of Bulgaria came of age in February, 1912. Some days before the festivities in Sofia, Bourchier had a long talk at Belgrade with the Serbian Prime Minister, who expressed himself heart and soul in favour of the alliance, but dreaded a rupture with Turkey and the resulting commercial isolation of Serbia. Bourchier returned to Sofia for the coming-of-age and had the satisfaction of persuading Ferdinand and Gueshoff to begin negotiations with Greece. In a dispatch written from there on February 2, 1912, he was able to say that

There are many indications of a growing tendency to abandon the unfortunate jealousies and dissensions which have hitherto separated them [the Balkan States] and rendered them the victims of foreign intrigues and ambitions. In view of this tendency the meeting of five Heirs Apparent of Balkan Kingdoms may denote the inception of a new policy of joint action for the defence of common interests and become a landmark in the history of the Peninsula.

The leading article of *The Times* on February 6, 1912, frankly admitted that, although Ferdinand's policy had not always commended itself here, the remarkable progress of Bulgaria was in large measure due to his sagacity.

After the festivities, Bourchier left for Athens. He took with him an oral communication from Gueshoff to the effect that

Our relations with Greece are excellent, but we wish to strengthen them and to render them still more intimate. We consider that the proposals which have been made to us through your agency furnish a suitable basis for an arrangement, and we should be glad if the Greek Government would now transmit them to us through its Minister, M. Panas.

Bourchier gave Venizelos this message on February 19. Three days later, the King gave Bourchier an audience lasting an hour

<sup>1</sup> Bourchier had never joined in the "loud hosannas" which greeted the Young Turk Revolution, considering that the enthusiasm was not in all cases disinterested. Lady Grogan quotes a long letter he wrote on May 1, 1912, to Edward Grigg explaining his attitude to the Turks. (The Life of J.D. Bourchier, pp. 140-1.)

and told him he had decided to comply with Gueshoff's suggestion. On March 4, Bourchier also found the Crown Prince of Greece on his side. Henceforth, the negotiations were carried on by diplomatic means. Bourchier's work for the League, however, was not finished. Russia had made the suggestion that it might be possible to draw Greece and Bulgaria together through a reconciliation of the Greek and Bulgarian Churches. In this connexion, Bourchier, who travelled via Constantinople on his way from Sofia to Athens, undertook the delicate task of sounding the Patriarch Joachim III and the Exarch Joseph.

The Balkan League began to take definite shape on March 13, 1912, when the agreement between Serbia and Bulgaria was completed. Crete continued to figure as a bogy, hindering the negotiations between Bulgaria and Greece while Bourchier worked hard in Athens. He went on a tour with Venizelos in April, after the elections, and shared the Prime Minister's popularity. His deafness now made the discussion of confidential matters so difficult that he and Venizelos were only able to thrash out the details of the agreement while they walked and rode on the slopes of Mount Pelion. Bourchier appears to have been present when the Greco-Bulgarian Treaty was signed in Athens on May 29, 1912, although inevitably he was unable to refer to it in The Times. He went on leave in July and returned to Sofia via Rumania but failed in his attempt to persuade King Charles to bring Rumania into the Balkan League, although he probably had some influence on Rumania's decision to remain neutral when war should break out. The threatened changes were bound to compel readjustments and hence create discord both between individual Powers and between the Powers in the same group. Neither the Triple Alliance nor the Triple Entente felt as compact or as strong in the summer of 1912 as in the aftermath of Agadir. The Russo-German Agreement at Port Baltic made in July1 seemed to promise German recognition of the Triple Entente. The Times struggled hard to get this conception of an equilibrium accepted for it was known in Printing House Square that the state of feeling between Britain and France now seemed almost completely to forbid common diplomatic action. Also, the office, which after 1910 came near to losing its faith in the entente, was by 1912 so hard-pressed by Northcliffe that it all but lost confidence in itself.

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 711-2, supra.

# XXIV

# END OF THE "OLD GANG"

N February 22, 1910, Arthur Fraser Walter, Chairman of The Times Publishing Company, Limited, died at Bear Wood after an attack of influenza at the age of 64. The death of the second largest single holder of shares made no immediate change in the constitutional fabric of The Times. Agreeably with the understanding which Bell had negotiated with Northcliffe before the purchase, Walter's son, John, became Chairman of the Company in his father's stead, at the age of thirty-seven. John Walter had been educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, and was introduced into the office in 1898. In the intervening years he had served Bell as an assistant, and more recently had been in Spain and Portugal as The Times correspondent. He wrote an excellent English and was a fair linguist. He had before him a promising career in the foreign service when news of his father's illness reached him in Madrid in an urgent telegram from Bell advising his immediate return. When two days later he arrived at Bear Wood his father was already dying. At the time, Northcliffe was himself undergoing an operation, but he wrote the fifth Walter a letter cordially sympathizing with his bereavement and welcoming him as the new Chairman:

Dear Mr. Walter,

24.2.1910.

Will you kindly convey to Mrs. Walter and accept yourself my expression of sympathy in this great loss.

I would have been present at the last ceremony had I not been for some weeks past in medical hands at this place.

As we may possibly not meet for many months you will not, I ask, regard it as an intrusion if I say now that you will always have my earnest support in your endeavour to maintain the Paper in the high station your greatly respected father desired it to hold in the worlds of Government and of Letters.

I do firmly believe that when we are rid of some of our inevitable initial troubles a bright era will dawn at Printing House Square, and I know that the Directors, and my personal colleagues, will cordially assist and make your life there happy and prosperous.

Yours sincerely,

NORTHCLIFFE.

# THE FIFTH WALTER BECOMES CHAIRMAN

The offer of support to "your endeavour to maintain the Paper" was encouraging; the tone of the letter as a whole was more than kind.

While Arthur Walter's death and his son's succession could not disturb the constitutional situation as settled in June, 1908, Northcliffe's cordial letter made the change a possible occasion for discussing, and perhaps clarifying, certain aspects of the existing business relationship between himself and the new Chairman. Walter, at any rate, saw an opportunity to adjust the realities of his position in accordance with its responsibilities. As a young man he wished to break with his father's policy of detachment; as junior in years and experience to Northcliffe, he entertained an admiration for him not common in P.H.S., but while genuinely anxious to work with him he was not inclined to remain a passive figurehead in The Times Publishing Company. Limited, as one of Northcliffe's numerous companies. Moreover. it was not impossible that Northcliffe might, in the course of time, wish to be relieved of responsibility for the paper. Walter, consequently, thought it his duty to prepare himself to govern, to the extent of his opportunity, any crisis which should emerge if and when, and for whatever cause, Northcliffe's pleasure in possessing The Times should diminish.

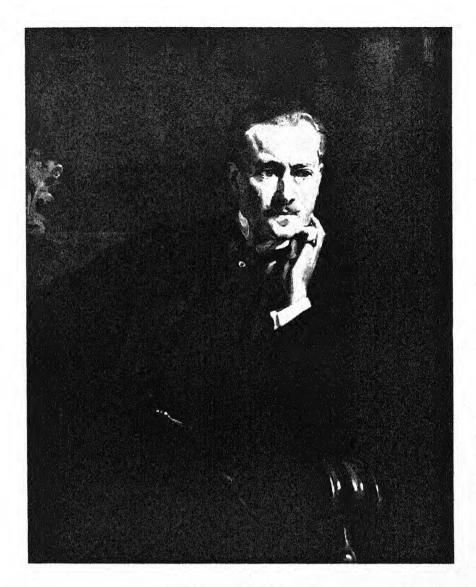
Hence Walter soon made the definite suggestion that the action over the alleged excessive printing costs, *i.e.*, Item No. 7 in the Bell-Sterling schedule, be settled. He wanted this done as part of a general settlement which should assimilate his own interest to that of Northcliffe and give him a share in, and an influence, not merely upon the finance of the Company but upon the paper itself, commensurate with his position as Chairman. The fifth Walter valued *The Times*, and the task of maintaining it, as a primary interest; not, as his predecessors, governed by the implications of Walter I's will, had done, as a trust inseparably bound up with their interest as hereditary

The main family interests in Printing House Square, besides the building and the site, consisted of 40,000 First Preference Shares issued in consideration of Arthur Walter's position as one of the original proprietors of *The Times*; 100,000 Second Preference Shares issued to him in respect of his two-thirds ownership of the printing business; and 50,000 of the same Second Preference Shares issued to Godfrey Walter in respect of his one-third ownership of the printing business. John Walter's plan was to acquire Godfrey Walter's Second Preference Shares and with them, in addition to his own First and Second Preference Shares, to make an exchange for a number of Ordinary

printers.

Shares which alone carried voting power. By doing this he would make himself the next largest single proprietor after Northcliffe.

Walter's suggestion created an immense amount of discussion. Advisers of all sorts were consulted. Kennedy Jones was asked his opinion. Sutton was sent for. Nicholson had ideas on the subject. Solicitors were brought into it. Harold Harmsworth and others who had assisted in finding some of the original £320.000 were involved. The scheme, it turned out, meant nothing less than that in certain circumstances The Times might return to the control, if not the ownership, of the family. This was a matter which required thinking about. It raised the whole question of the national character of the paper. Earlier threats on the part of Jones that he would advise Northcliffe to "drop" The Times now seemed to be the "bluff" that some in the office had originally contended. The difficulties that Walter's scheme was fated to encounter were probably as much the creation of Northcliffe's complicated financial situation as of his free intention. It is highly probable too that vague hints, hardly equivalent to promises, had been given to Harold Harmsworth that Northcliffe would never relinquish control over The Times without giving him notice. The very first time, i.e., in Februarv 1910, that Walter mentioned his idea, Northcliffe welcomed it on several grounds. His doctor had rebuked him for spending too much energy on The Times; it was a fact that the discussions over it tired him; he was tired of being tired over that sort of business. "I want The Times to be only more The Times and John Walter to be John Walter and not as you amusingly say a 'phantom chairman'" he wrote; "your letter shows me that unlike the attitude of harmful suspicion I have faced these two years, your sole desire is 'the good of the paper.'" Excellent; but he pointed out at the same time that "there are to be considered the interests of my brother Harold, Jones. Sir John Ellerman (whom I do not know well) and Nicholson." After an interval of several months, during which Northcliffe was absent from London, Walter went to Sutton Place for a further, and, it was hoped, definitive, conference on his plans and ambitions. Among these, as he told Northcliffe, was the embodiment of an article in the projected agreement to the effect that in the event of Northcliffe's predecease Walter should have the option to purchase the whole of his holding upon an agreed basis. Another provision should extinguish any claims upon Item No. 7. Northcliffe gave general assent to the whole of Walter's scheme with the inclusion of these articles. He thought, however, that the details needed examination.



JOHN WALTER IV

CHAIRMAN THE TIMES PUBLISHING COMPANY LTD 1910-1922

CO-CHIEF PROPRIETOR OF THE TIMES, 1923
From a painting in oils by P. A. de Laszlo

# END OF THE "OLD GANG"

I know the whole subject is distasteful to you. So it is to me; and in view of your Partners' ultimatum I will for the present say no more than this: that I am ready to renounce the hopes you held out to me and the solution that seemed so desirable to us both, if by doing so I can contribute to the object we both have at heart, namely the placing of the future control of the paper beyond the reach of chance or of any private interest.

Northcliffe's answer came immediately: it contrasted his methods and those of others, insisted that his control was more beneficial to the paper than the encyclopaedias and bookclubs to which the paper had been earlier driven, insinuated that discussions of this kind held up the progress of the paper itself and requested that Walter, as a man with a future, should leave well alone. His letter was as he liked letters, brief.

Elmwood, St. Peter's, Kent.

Wednesday 10th August 1910

Dear John Walter,

Ponder over the adage that delays are dangerous and remember that you and I are very young men.

While I am principal proprietor of the Paper it will not, I assure you, resume its trading company operations, and I hope that you will help me to make it what it is becoming and what it was before its evil days. If you do not, I shall be extremely and sincerely sorry, but *The Times* will appear each day and without doubtful aids that shall be nameless.

Yours sincerely,

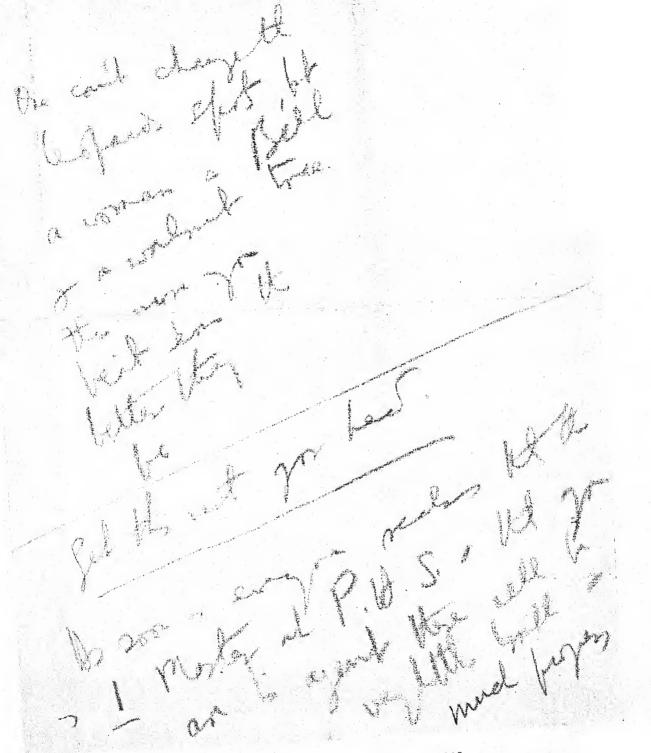
Northcliffe.

Upon reflection the brevity of the letter seemed to the writer to be less admirable. A supplement was sent. He had forgotten that he had given some sort of undertaking to certain fellow investors, principally his brother Harold, who had been mentioned in Northcliffe's February letter. He re-read Walter's letter and decided to send a wire; it read:

JOHN WALTER, Times Office, London.

Your letter omits any reference to other proprietors' wishes very forcibly referred to by me verbally at Sutton Place and I am very sure sent in letter forwarded by my doctor at Valescure. Letter otherwise most inaccurate. Northcliffe.

The telegram was written by a Northcliffe who was clearly in an excited mood. Walter, as the reader has seen, had mentioned Harold Harmsworth and John Ellerman in the early part of his letter. His was, however, a long letter and Northcliffe never



Northcliffe's instructions to Nicholson 1910

## JOHN WALTER STANDS UP FOR HIMSELF

learnt to read or write letters dealing at one time with several subjects or even with several aspects of the same subject. Walter's reply was polite but firm; it was short. He said that he had never doubted Northcliffe's care for the interests of his partners, and proceeded to make a statement which so much impressed Northcliffe that years later he confessed that it pleased him to find how well the fifth Walter stood up for himself. He took little pleasure, however, in the incident at the time. On the contrary, it then angered him. What Walter said was that he himself had ascertained from Jones and Nicholson that Harmsworth and Ellerman would fall in with any scheme that Northcliffe recommended. It was evident that neither Jones nor Nicholson were aware that Northcliffe and Harold Harmsworth had ideas in common regarding the disposal, in certain circumstances, of the control over The Times. Walter had made a very awkward point.

Northcliffe returned no answer for a fortnight. He then promised that he would have an early talk. In the meantime, Buckle and Bell were doing their best, carrying on as of old the old work of their old departments. The surveillance of Jones and Nicholson brought a good deal of new work into the hands of new subordinates of their own appointment. Buckle's and Bell's routine was thereby not disturbed. Nevertheless, changes were in the air. "X's" resolution to be Northcliffe for the future was more than once reiterated to Nicholson. "Let them know that you are my agent," he insisted. Again, he privately instructed Nicholson that: "With one master in P.H.S. there will be more progress and less trouble." At another time he varied an old catch: "A Bell, a woman and a walnut-tree, the more they are beaten the better they be." Nicholson was not the man to be thus provoked into hasty action, rather he continued quietly to address himself to the task of creating harmony within the office.

In August 1910, Buckle sought to secure Capper's election to the Board and he suggested it could be done by electing at the same time Nicholson, who had just been given the status and title of Assistant Manager. But Bell feared it might lead to a series of wholesale changes. The answer depressed Buckle. During the autumn of 1910 matters worsened. The fault-finding messages, sudden appointments of new subordinates and unexpected dismissals of old ones which streamed from Northcliffe's head-quarters at Carmelite House affected Bell's and Buckle's nerves. The Editor even wrote to Northcliffe saying that he dreaded the sight of his blue envelopes. Naturally, he, with other holders

of key-positions, came to feel more and more unsettled. Kennedy Jones's pleasure at the prospect of retirement of some of the older members was deliberately transparent. No direct criticism of the Editor's professional competence was made; but Buckle took an early opportunity to mention that, if the proprietors felt they would be happier with a younger Editor of their own appointment, he would be more than pleased to make way for him. Buckle added that the state of his health encouraged him to emphasize the timeliness, on personal grounds, of the appointment of a successor. Northeliffe, however, did not yet desire to remove the Editor. He had decided to deal first with Bell as the more dominant personality and more effective representative of the office and all its departments.

The Foreign Department, in any event, interested Northcliffe particularly. And this remained, as it always had been, Bell's own personal interest. He had never been responsible for the details of its work, but he made all the appointments and was in constant correspondence with the foreign agents of the paper. The "Chief," who liked to find means of his own to keep himself informed regarding the staff, had long made a favourite of Chirol. After the settlement of the Bourchier and Steed disputes a new and serious office controversy centred upon Dr. G. E. Morrison. The China Correspondent, like his colleagues in Bulgaria and Austria, differed in political conviction from Chirol. whose action respecting the text of his dispatches was resented. Morrison, like Bourchier, objected to Chirol's "suppressing" or cutting facts which did not accord with the policy of the paper. or adding statements of his own which did so accord. Nobody but Chirol had ever done this. In particular, Morrison objected to the "mutilation" which he said was directed by the doctrine that "Japan can do no wrong; China can do no right." This was just the kind of dispute which interested Northcliffe; and Morrison, crossing from the Far East through Vienna, learnt from Steed at the latter place that this was so. Upon Morrison's arrival at Printing House Square and failure to secure satisfaction he threatened to lay the facts before Northcliffe. Chirol protested that, if he did so, and if Northcliffe were to receive the correspondent personally, he would resign. When, notwithstanding, Morrison forthwith went to Paris to see Northcliffe, Chirol, reflecting that a proffered resignation might be accepted, withdrew. Northcliffe duly noted Morrison's statements; they were. accurate or otherwise, vital to his purpose of mastering The Times. If on Bell's and Chirol's theory The Times was the staff. and the staff was The Times, what was the position of Steed.

### NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Bourchier and Morrison? Did *The Times* consist only of Buckle, Bell and Chirol? The definition of the *esse* of *The Times* might have served another Chief Proprietor as an interesting point upon which to speculate, but Northcliffe was not accustomed to spend time in philosophical speculation; at the end of a year he was determined to act. The turn of the year generally led him to make new resolutions, new appointments and new policies. Bell, to give the New Year a good opening, wrote a seasonal greeting to Northcliffe, and added:

### "NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS 1911

For Lord N. To think twice before he telephones.

For M.B. To think thrice before he writes letters."

This was exactly the kind of meaningful note that Northcliffe delighted to receive, irrespective of his agreement with its tenor. Loving a crisp letter whose every word was of pregnant significance, he enjoyed, above all, the experience of receiving such a communication from such an office, to him synonymous with long Board Meetings, long leading articles, long conferences and long letters. The year opened pleasantly enough but for Buckle's persistent gloom.

The gloom, unfortunately, was justified. Northcliffe came to the office early one morning in the New Year. Buckle was opening the editorial post with his thumb, a point of office routine which Northcliffe did not fail to make serve as a symbol of the methods of "Ye Black Friars," as he called them. He stayed in P.H.S. the whole of that day and for six solid hours discussed every aspect of office affairs with his (the proprietorial tone had now become unmistakable) Editor and his Managing Director; and, not for the first time, he directed the conversation towards the future of the paper, its better editing and its better management. On the occasion of this visit, Northcliffe more than once let his anger get the better of him. With an intention which Buckle thought obvious the talk eventually turned to a solicitude for the editorial health. When the Editor once again mentioned his readiness to make way for a younger man he was, as on former occasions, promptly assured that nothing more was sought than that he should work less hard and less frequently at nights. Despite the deliberate inconclusiveness of this conversation, Bell, spoken to separately, was instructed to make a move towards finding a possible successor. The former Johannesburg Correspondent, Geoffrey Dawson (then Robinson), a young man who had been serving *The Times* since 1906, had permanently returned to London at Christmas 1910. He

possessed the advantage of Northcliffe's acquaintance. He had naturally looked into the office, seen Bell and told him that as he was still interested in Imperial problems he was prepared to continue working for the paper in any new capacity that might be open and agreeable. Having reported these facts to Northcliffe, Bell was instructed to try him in a position in the Imperial and Foreign Department. Dawson was invited to Sutton Place and there talked to at every available moment of an entire week-end about a place on *The Times* that might be his. On February 14, 1911, Dawson came into the office on trial for, it was explained, a possibly high editorial position in the not distant future.

Dawson's appointment was an excellent augury for the New Year. The new man was educated at Eton; he was an Oxford (Magdalen) man with two first classes and a Fellow of All Souls College. He had served in the Colonial Office and in South Africa had been Milner's Private Secretary, and then editor, for five years, of the Johannesburg Star as well as correspondent of The Times for South Africa. To the staff, Dawson's position in the office was not clearly defined and it was not certain, from his own bearing, that he regarded it as permanent. But it quickly became clear enough in the office that the new man was sound as well as brilliant; energetic also. He organized and edited the reporting of the Coronation (June 22) and of the railway strike (August). If this was a fair sample of the new blood that the new control had been clamouring for, and was now going to introduce, \* there was indeed room for optimism. Buckle, personally linked with Dawson through All Souls, was delighted with the choice. It renewed his faith in Northcliffe. Here was, at last, exactly the kind of cooperation he had despaired of. Bell was equally pleased. His interest in Africa had not waned since the Jameson Raid. It was, in fact, a frank and honest appointment, for Northcliffe, like Bell, was a genuine Imperialist. Chirol, who had taken an interest in Indian, Far Eastern and Continental affairs, took little or no account of the Dominions. Grigg, who had rejoined The Times in 1908, was responsible for the Imperial section of the Foreign page. He had edited and made a success of the important Empire Supplement issued in May, 1909. The attention given to Empire affairs in other portions of the paper was in Northcliffe's opinion hardly sufficient, and Grigg, who represented the younger Imperialist outlook, was encouraged to develop the department. Chirol, with Buckle, equally approved the new appointment. It looked as if Dawson and Northcliffe might well get on together. The prospect of such harmony was an immense relief to Bell. There followed a series of

#### GEOFFREY DAWSON JOINS THE STAFF

visits to P.H.S. in which Northcliffe interviewed every member of his staff, listening to their complaints and asking for constructive proposals. It was now evident to all that Northcliffe so far from dropping *The Times* had determined to make a success of it—and within a very short space of time. Observers in the office expected him to announce a revolutionary policy soon. The series of interviews with the staff marked, or at least pointed to, that conclusion. Chirol, in his interview with Northcliffe, mentioned that he was not averse from retiring if that were wished. Privately he hoped that, as he would be sixty in May 1912, he might be able to keep his post until then.

Inevitably the first effect of Northcliffe's emergence from the background was to create in the office anti-Northcliffe and pro-Northcliffe cliques corresponding with the ambitions and ages of individuals. The younger men naturally stood together in defence of their future careers. Buckle, Bell and Chirol, the "giant tortoises" as Northcliffe described them to Walter, stood together in defence of the past, i.e., of the guarantees that Bell, as they had been led to believe, had succeeded in extracting from Northcliffe. Buckle and Chirol still knew nothing of Sutton's significant Sunday morning visit, nothing of the unconditional letter he dictated and Bell signed. Bourchier, Morrison and Steed, in so far as they believed his energy would benefit the paper, were inclined to favour Northcliffe, who for his part, saw in the three distinguished foreign correspondents a solid wedge with which he could divide Bell and Chirol. Bell came to doubt if his contract signed on June 11, 1908, would be renewed when it expired two years hence. The Editor had known no peace of mind for a twelve-month.

Buckle, though happy at the appointment of Dawson, remained greatly affected by the death of Arthur Walter, with whom he had worked so long and who symbolized *The Times* of his formative and mature years. He had at once cordially welcomed his son, to whom he gave the assurance that his colleagues on the Board "were all loyal to the Walter tradition and anxious to give it full scope. So, I have reason to believe, are the new proprietors. But with them, of course, the traditions of *The Times* are an acquired taste: with you they are in the blood." So little had Buckle at that date, March, 1910, recognized the import of the change. Towards the end of the year it was otherwise; the cumulative effect of Northcliffe's messages had wrought a change in his health. His spirit, however, was undaunted. The new control wrought no such change in Buckle's idea of the

editorship as had been wrought in Bell's idea of the managership. Bell himself had tried to get Buckle to develop. "Now let me give you my view," he wrote in November 1910:

The main point about which we were all agreed was that the political independence of the paper should be preserved but that in all relating to the management and the form of the paper Northcliffe had a right to interfere and rule.

Just as I recognize Nicholson as his representative in all relating to the management why not recognize Pryor as his representative in all relating to the details of the editing such as make-up and lengthy reports. Just as Nicholson comes and discusses with me any matter of importance and just as we give way to each other on the rare occasions upon which we disagree, so let Pryor come and consult you on any matter of importance affecting in any way the character of the paper as to which I am sure he is quite willing to let you be the final arbiter. . . .

The political direction of the paper would remain wholly with you, the general surveillance of the paper rest wholly with you. Just as Richmond runs the *Lit-Supp*. and Chirol the foreign dept., let others take other pages of the paper with full responsibility for the night.

That, said Bell, was the sort of arrangement which would work. It would lessen the strain on Buckle's health without lessening his authority. Bell also said it was agreed by his colleagues that Buckle would ever try to do too much but that his burden of night work could and should be lightened. But Buckle was not thus to be reassured. He saw the desire to lessen the strain upon his health as a pretext; it was a plan to keep him out of the office at night. He had, it is true, done thirty years' night work for The Times, twenty-seven of them with the responsibility of Editor, all of them, by any reckoning, a burden, but he was not willing to drop it in the existing circumstances. Buckle, therefore, completely rejected any such proposal as "inconsistent with my notion of editing, that the Editor should not supervise the political leaders, &c., before they appear, which must be done at night." Developing the strong hint he had given to Jones early in the year, Buckle now said he was coming to the belief that, at his age, he should think of retiring. "I have reached the age when such work as I have done broke down my predecessors -Barnes at fifty-six, Delane at sixty (though he lingered on for more than a year), Chenery at fifty-eight." His circumstances of work were, he added, no longer agreeable; the Board system. originally conceived as the independent organ of executive

### POSITION OF THE "OLD GANG"

power, was breaking down; the meetings¹ were not really useful, for nothing but Northcliffe's will could prevail. Writing to his old colleague he said: "You [Bell] he has largely put aside and Chirol will hold on to work very lightly in future." In all the circumstances Buckle felt compelled to offer Bell an opportunity to be made by his own stepping aside: "A young man in my place would be an excellent thing for the paper, provided he were a fellow like Amery—and I think Northcliffe should try to get such a one." It was in this spirit that Buckle had been found one morning in January, 1911, opening the letters with his thumb. Apart from the appointment of Dawson, what had happened since had depressed the Editor still more.

Meanwhile John Walter was still working for a settlement with Northcliffe which should bring peace to the paper and stabilize his own position. As Chairman of Directors he had been working with congenial colleagues, distinguished members of the staff who had served the paper under his father, and the Editor who had been appointed by his grandfather. He had resented Bell's treatment of his father at the time of the Pearson episode, but two years' absence from the office, with Bell's obvious pleasure at his return, had paved the way for reconciliation. While sentiment naturally inclined Walter to support the defenders of the "Old Gang," he was, none the less, attracted by the fascinating and forceful personality of Lord Northcliffe. At the moment there was a financial matter which gave both of them cause for preoccupation. The proposal which Bell, by dint of much pressing advice, had finally induced Northcliffe to offer and Arthur Walter to accept, had proved equally disappointing to both. The paper had just managed to pay the First Preference dividend. But the dividend on the £150,000 Second Preference held by John Walter was already two, and would shortly be three, years in arrears, while the chances of any interest being received by Lord Northcliffe and his friends on their Ordinary Shares seemed to have receded into a very distant future. Whether this disappointing result was due, as Lord Northcliffe was fond of complaining, to the obstruction he met with from the "Old Gang" or not, it had become clear to Walter that the paper would never prosper until Northcliffe was allowed a free hand to manage it on his own lines. Other members of the family, his father's younger brothers were in agreement.

<sup>1</sup> Buckle was more correct than he knew, or Bell admitted; for they were, indeed, abandoned three years later by Northcliffe's orders—he then said that all Board Meetings were a waste of time.

Hubert Walter shared John Walter's view of Bell's devotion to the paper, but regarded him as permanently embittered against the family. He, too, had a genuine admiration and liking for Northcliffe; he had moreover a clear understanding of, as well as sympathy with, Northcliffe's journalism. He was considered a good writer and a useful member of the foreign staff of *The Times*. It was his ambition to work with Northcliffe and ultimately to become a full correspondent, as he did at Paris.

Ralph Walter shared the suspicions of his brother Hubert towards Bell. He knew Jones well, but had little contact with Northcliffe. He found it impossible to work with Chirol: he was one of the few who failed to get on with Nicholson. He was, notwithstanding, very anxious to please Northcliffe, for he cherished an ambition to be appointed joint manager with Nicholson, a plan that carried little chance of success. Thus the Walter family as a whole were inclined to side with Northcliffe as against Bell; also against Chirol, who stood with Bell. Buckle. while never having approved of the Northcliffe connexion. remained attached to Walter. He was proud to declare himself the servant of the Walter family, the essence of The Times as he understood the paper. He was at the same time deeply loyal to Bell, giving him all his support in the burden he was carrying on behalf of the office as a whole, and always standing up courageously against Northcliffe's tendency to be unjust to him.

But now in 1911 that Northcliffe was coming out into the open, the question was what could be done by Buckle and Bell, Chirol and others to maintain their positions. And they could scarcely look for support from Walter on the point at issue. He had never believed, or pretended to believe, in the effectiveness of the "guarantees" which Bell was supposed to have extracted from Northcliffe, and the alleged existence of which had played so conspicuous a part in his campaign against Pearson. Consequently, Walter did not regard it as a matter of principle that Bell and his friends should retain their respective positions indefinitely, or that their judgment on matters of policy should always prevail against those of their Chief Proprietor. As no other ally was available, Buckle, Bell and their colleagues were constrained to hope that the new control having appointed its Assistant Manager, selected for trial a possible future Editor, and, having accomplished the necessary economies. the future would somehow automatically and gradually effect a reconciliation of the old and new parties which would last for the few years they could look forward to. Such was the office position at the beginning of 1911 when Dawson came into it.

#### NORTHCLIFFE SHOWS HIS HAND

Much, in the near future, must depend upon Bell, and he, for once, was not in good controversial form. He was not well and had been seeing the doctor. His friends insisted that he should go away to recuperate. Northcliffe also constantly urged him to rest. But this, thought Bell, was interested advice. He refused and proceeded to treat the whole affair in characteristic fashion. "Like the divine Sarah, 'quand je me repose je me fatigue," he replied to his wife, who gave the same advice and with serious concern. He bade her leave it at that. The medical man was not easily beaten; but Bell put him off with a promise to think about taking three weeks from the middle of February. In the meantime he joked about the talk, then new, of "bloodpressure" which the profession had "invented." He said he disliked the remedy suggested: "Eat what you loathe and abstain from the little you like; lie in bed as much as possible, and then for three weeks reduce yourself to desperation in such haunts of dissipation as Bath or Sidmouth." His promise to go away was given with a mental reservation and three weeks later he was still in London. He then announced that he had no intention of dissipating at Sidmouth and persuaded his family and his physicians to give him massage at Park Crescent. Joyfully he told Steed that "I have managed to get over the proposed exile. As far as I can see at present I hope to remain in town until well into April." So he wrote on February 15, 1911, in a burst of cheerfulness which followed upon the excitements of January. He could well have gone away then if he had not chosen to stick to his desk out of pure love of working.

In less than a month a crisis in the office threw upon him an immense strain. He was abruptly faced with what Buckle called "an intolerable action" and Chirol "a flagrant interference" by Northcliffe. It was in fact the strongest act of authority over the editorial policy of the paper that he had so far attempted; it amounted in fact to dictation and it concerned a political, an international matter. The debates on the Ratification of the Declaration of London had begun in February. The rights of neutral nations in war, prominent on the agenda of the naval conference held in 1908 and 1909, had been duly discussed. British public opinion upon the rights of belligerents and neutrals in the matter of contraband remained sharply divided. Among those who refused to accept any solution which in any circumstances could result, during war, in reduction of the power of the Royal Navy, was Northcliffe. He held that the Declaration of London must weaken Britain by robbing it of the power to deprive an enemy of materials essential to his

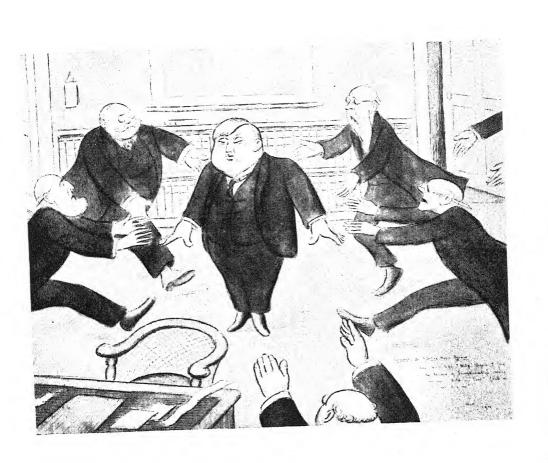
prosecution of the war. Having come to this conclusion, Northcliffe determined that the Daily Mail, the Evening News and the Weekly Dispatch should resolutely attack the policy of ratification. This they did in the last week of January, 1911. The united pressure of these widely circulated journals, in combination with political efforts, would, he hoped, bring about the defeat of the Bill. Upon reflection, he appreciated that The Times, despite its small circulation, but with its superior political influence, might, if it persisted in the line it had taken during the conference and argued for ratification, render vain the efforts of the opposition and, hence, of his other newspapers. In such a case, apart altogether from the political aspect of the matter. the Northcliffe journals would expose themselves to the taunt that their campaign was ill-judged or badly led and therefore deserved to fail. In consequence they must lose in political influence and perhaps even in circulation Something would have to be done to prevent such an occurrence. But before taking action Northcliffe waited to see the attitude the Editor of The Times would adopt. He was not long in doubt.

Buckle in consequence of the general support he was giving the Government, Chirol on account of international policy, and Thursfield in view of a section of Admiralty opinion were all in agreement that the Declaration should be ratified. When therefore Northcliffe observed that The Times was about to support ratification, he told Bell (doubting, it may be supposed, Buckle's willingness to listen) over the telephone that he was "sorry to worry him when he was ill" but that he strongly disapproved. Bell naturally pointed out that The Times was only now doing what it had consistently done since the contraband article had originally been mooted, that the correspondence columns of the paper had been open to both sides and that, after discussion, the paper for good reasons of national and international policy had determined upon supporting the Government and ratification. It was, he admitted—and also claimed—a question upon which it was possible for people to differ.

This moderate statement by no means satisfied Northcliffe, who was, as always, unprepared to argue at any length with the "Old Gang." Instead, he wrote one of his short letters to Nicholson:

I have heard nothing from *The Times* in regard to their Declaration of London. If resignations are offered accept them.

You suggest that the matter might be discussed at to-day's Board Meeting, but I do not think that you should be present at a discussion of my views when I am not there. I think that you ought to say so, and leave the room.



EVENINGS IN PRINTING HOUSE SQUARE Lord Northcliffe: "Help! Again I feel the demons of Sensationalism rising in me. Hold me fast! Curb me, if you love me!"

From the original water-colour by Sir Max Beerbohm, in Printing House Square.

#### RESIGNATIONS EXPECTED

It would be a little more profitable if they discussed the new subscription scheme, and what is to be done.

He followed it up with a note to "My dear Bell," who, as he knew, was ill:

March 3rd 1911

As far as the Declaration of London is concerned I have made up my mind what I am going to do about it and I shall act very definitely. I do not propose to allow one farthing of my fortune to be used in connection with that which would injure this country. I trust these words to the wise will be sufficient.

I am sorry to see the falling off in the figures you enclosed.

Let me hope that you will not return to work until you are rested. I have been urging you to rest for the last three years, the probability is that a six weeks' change would profit you immensely.

I have my rough and tumbles with you, My Dear Bell, but I am very fond of you.

The first paragraph of this letter embodied a clear threat to any political "independence" of the editorial staff of The Times as they had known it and had, under Bell's leadership, united to preserve. 1 Bell rightly interpreted the closing paragraphs as a suggestion that any unwillingness to bring The Times into line with Northcliffe's view might, even at this second time of asking, be generously excused as due to overwork; and, in the event of his still refusing to join with him against his colleagues, as an invitation to evade a direct collision by going on vacation until the debates were concluded. Bell was the last man to use his health as an excuse to escape a difficult situation. He had to see it through. In bad health, and suffering from acute personal disappointment and apprehension for the future he discussed the position with Buckle and Chirol. No note has survived to indicate the steps which Bell in fact took between the 3rd and 7th March. He must however have known that Northcliffe had instructed Nicholson to accept without hesitation or delay any offers of resignation from whatever quarter. The position Bell chose to take after much anxious thought is outlined in a long letter to Chirol:

7th March 1911

I should like to put on record the points on which I agree with you and the reasons that make me take a somewhat different attitude in this crisis.

I entirely agree with you in thinking that N.'s action in this matter is in distinct contravention of our agreement with him, and that all of us, and perhaps more particularly you and myself as the main instruments of that agreement, have a perfect right, as far as N. is concerned, to take any action we may think expedient on the ground that the agreement has been broken. I further agree with you in

<sup>1</sup> See p. 673, supra.

saying that the matter is one of principle and not directly one as to the advantages or disadvantages of the Declaration of London. Where I disagree with you is in your contention, as I understand it, that being a matter of principle the particular question on which it arises need not enter into consideration.

I disagree with you here because I hold that everyone has to act in accordance with a bundle of principles some of which are bound at times to conflict with others—and that in such cases one has to sacrifice the lesser to preserve the greater—and then there are some to which all others must give way and we have to say "we must stick to it ruat coelum." Let us suppose for a moment that N. was firmly convinced that the Declaration would imply the immediate ruin of the Empire and that The Times by opposing it could avert that ruin. Even you I think would admit that he would be right to use his influence with The Times against it. I do not for a moment urge that this is the case, for N. himself speaks of it only as "an injury to the Empire," but I give it as a supposition merely to show what I mean when I say that one principle may rightly have to give way to another—and that, in maintaining one principle, one must not lose sight of others.

You may say, "Yes, N. would be right, but we, holding the exact opposite view, would be equally bound to refuse "—and I agree, but as neither of us hold this extreme view—as there is at least as respectable a body of opinion on one side as on the other—as, above all, the ratification seems certain to pass and our advocacy or opposition would probably not affect the result—is this a case of "ruat coelum"?

Well that depends upon what we save as compared with what we sacrifice. Perhaps because I have been for 46 years connected with The Times I hold a somewhat exaggerated view of its public value. Perhaps, too, my own personal interest unduly colours my views. But it seems to me that opposition is quite certain to result in the complete annihilation of The Times as it has existed for the last 80 years as a great influence on the whole for the good of the country and certainly as the leader of the Press. We entered into the agreement with N. in order to save the independence of The Times. We admit that on one, two or possibly three occasions he has infringed that agreement. Is that sufficient reason to say, "We will abandon the fight and give you the whole of it"? What would you think of a general who gave up the citadel because the enemy had twice broken through his lines, or wasted the whole of his defensive force upon the defence of one not vitally important outwork?

I admit that the position is extremely difficult, and more particularly intolerable for you and Buckle, responsible for the attitude of the paper, but I believe it to be our duty both to those who if we resisted would follow us into retirement at very grave personal inconvenience, and to those who, like Sterling, have invested in the belief

#### BELL COUNSELS MODERATION

that we would keep the paper in its old independent lines, that we should not, out of regard to our personal dignity, give up our trust or adopt a policy which we all admit would result in our having no influence whatever over the future of the paper. I think that if the time comes at last when we have to admit that the position has become untenable we shall strengthen our position by being able to show that we did not at once throw up the sponge at the first attack on a very controversial subject—that we exacted terms of surrender even upon that and adopted neutrality upon a point practically already decided. Compare that with what we have to say if we force a quarrel now and get ejected. Imagine a shareholder asking us the reason. "Because the independence of The Times was threatened." -" But have you secured the independence?"-" No, but the principle was infringed."-" Did you thereby obtain the ratification of the Declaration of London?"-" No, because it was certain beforehand." -" What have you saved?"-" Our dignity!"

Don't think, however, that I do not thoroughly sympathize with your view.

Thus while Bell admitted that the action of Northcliffe was, as Buckle and Chirol said, "in direct contravention of our agreement," considered generally, he maintained that the particular question upon which the action was taken did not really involve conscience. There was no point in forcing a quarrel and getting ejected over a matter in which, he said, not the editorial conscience, but only the editorial dignity, was touched. Better, he thought, not to "abandon the fight" by resigning. While there can be little doubt that here Bell was arguing as much with himself as with Chirol, his letter persuaded Buckle and Chirol to avoid a quarrel. At the decisive moment *The Times* took a neutral position—it neither accepted nor rejected the Declaration.

The conscientious "view," if not the conscience of Buckle and Chirol and Thursfield and therefore of *The Times*, thus remained unexpressed in the paper—at the dictation of a Chief Proprietor, who had—so Bell had assured them—undertaken never to exert that influence or pressure. Bell's much-prized guarantees, certainly sought in all good faith, were now seen to depend entirely upon Northcliffe's pleasure. In fact, in very experience, they were not guarantees at all. On the contrary, Bell was now required to act upon Northcliffe's "absolute instructions" in accordance with the letter of February 9, which Bell had written in the presence of Sutton. The only alternative open to Bell, Buckle, Chirol, and Monypenny was to resign, and this, it was now suggested, would not benefit the cause but would only "result in our having no influence over the future of the paper."

That this was a virtual surrender of the "soul" of The Times into the hands of Northcliffe was, perhaps, not at once realized to the full by Buckle and Chirol. To Bell, personally, Northcliffe had frequently repeated his wish not directly or indirectly to exercise editorial power over the paper. Notwithstanding, there still existed the letter dictated on February 9 by Sutton, who came prepared to cancel all preparations to purchase if Bell should not sign it. Bell doubtless half hoped until March 3, 1911. that the "Sutton" letter had been forgotten. infractions, there had been no collision between Bell and Northcliffe on the matter of editorial independence since they first talked. What friction there had been had been over figures. That was quite fair; it was Bell's proper department, his responsibility, and he could deal with it. In all the instances put together such friction never amounted to anything serious, vexatious though it might have been. But Northcliffe's letter to him of March 3 admitted of no further doubt that the situation was wholly different. It was beyond all possibility of concealment, that the adroit references to "my fortune" and the falling off in "the figures you enclosed" proved Northcliffe's determination to force by financial and every other means the assimilation of the policy of The Times with that of the Daily Mail and the Evening News. Bell knew the legal worth of the "guarantees." The Bell-Sterling agreement read simply that:

It shall be a fundamental principle of the said Company that the efficiency, reputation and character of *The Times* newspaper shall as far as possible be maintained at the present high standard and that on all existing political questions the independent attitude of the paper shall be maintained as heretofore.

Bell saw no hope of enforcing at law such a guarantee upon the instance of the Declaration of London. He knew that Northcliffe's "fortune" made vain any further litigation even if he had a good case.

The ratification incident was trying in the extreme to Buckle and Chirol. They were both men of acute sensibility, with rigid minds untempered by the compromises of the commercial world. It was even more trying to Bell, notwithstanding his advantage over his colleagues in knowledge of the world, in elasticity of mind, and in matter-of-factness of intelligence. To both Buckle and Chirol, then, the incident represented a great deal more than the baulking of a personal or editorial opinion on the merits of the ratification. The entire plan upon which, as a firm foundation

<sup>1</sup> See p. 549, supra.

and with the assent of Northcliffe, they had sought to rebuild *The Times* and to confirm its independence had been destroyed. Loyal as they were to Bell, and sensitive to his present ill-health, they realized that the basis upon which he had brought in Northcliffe was now proved delusive. They could not forbear to tell him so. All they could now hope to do was to work to save the paper from becoming what enemies were now openly accusing it of already being: "the édition de luxe of the Daily Mail."

To Bell the destruction of the "guarantees" was the heaviest blow he had sustained since Godfrey Walter's and Pearson's original announcement in The Times. Busy as he was with the day-to-day labour, he could neither forget his responsibility towards his colleagues nor the fact that, although Northcliffe might, possibly without his own assistance, have come into the control, it was he himself who had been his sponsor. For a man of not much less than sixty-four, he was astonishingly active and the fears that haunted him strengthened a life-long temptation to bury himself in the day's work. His old habits of personal industry, never outgrown, constrained him still to write rather than dictate letters, though he had condescended to the use of one of the new fountain-pens. His bold, round, ever clear and swift pen thus continued, as of old, to play its dominant part in the transaction of the daily business of The Times. The outlook for the "Old Gang" was depressing but Bell still penned his lively letters.

Still refusing "exile" to Sidmouth, Bell turned for relief to a campaign against a new Copyright Bill. At the end of the month of March he was deep in correspondence with Baron de Reuter and others on news-values and news-copyrights. On April 5, shortly before 2 o'clock, he wrote to the Baron promising a leader on the following Friday, when the Government Bill came up for second reading. He drafted notes for the leading article; and, incessant letter-writer that he was, next turned to address Mr. Sydney Buxton, upon whom, as one of the backers of the Copyright Bill, he was minded to exercise his driest wit. He wrote as follows:

April 5, 1911

Dear Mr. Buxton,

Although a Unionist I am not one of those who have hitherto associated the whole of the present Cabinet with a desire to plunder Hen roosts but when I see names such as yours and the Solicitor General's to a Copyright Bill containing Article 21 I begin to wonder whether my moderation has not been a mistake and whether the Cabinet really proposes to legalise burglary and larceny provided the delinquent will only confess.

coe 753

There is something to be said for it I admit and the next time I have the pleasure of calling on Mrs. Buxton, I shall try to pick up some unconsidered trifle and on my way home shall call at a Police office, explain that it is the property of Mrs. Buxton, show that it had no certificate of property attached to it, and treat it as my own until someone else manages to abstract it from me in the same manner.

Of course I must wait till your Bill passes with, I hope, an amendment to be proposed that it applies to all other kinds of property not specially

guarded by a certificate of ownership.

The Times has certain property—the product of a certain amount of brain power and an expenditure of about £125,000 per annum. Having acquired that property and spent a further £30,000 in presenting it in a convenient form it recovers about £8,000 from 3 or 4 people who pay a very high price for the first view of it before it can be seen by anyone else.

So he wrote, easily, until the end of the paragraph. Bell's heart then instantly ceased to beat. He slumped out of his chair and fell on the floor of the office in which he had sat for twenty-one years. Charles Frederick Moberly Bell was dead from overwork combined with the strain, slavery and scruple of recent crises.

He was born in 1847; he first wrote for The Times in 1865 at the age of eighteen, and was forty-three when Arthur Fraser Walter appointed him Assistant Manager. He was sixty-one when he refused to accept the Pearson agreement and beat him by bringing in Northcliffe. In his three years as Managing Director of the new Company he had been largely successful in resisting Northcliffe's encroachments on the liberty and responsibility of the Editor conceived by him as essential to The Times. The ratification crisis in which he failed was final for him. Whether or not it was final for his conception of the paper; whether or not his conception was a correct one, or the only correct one, will be seen in the careers of his successors in the service of The Times as recorded in the Chapters of this history which follow. The paper of April 6 printed a memoir written by Thursfield which began on the leader-page and ran to more than two columns. The tribute of ceremonial black rules was given by The Times to the "colleague whom we all loved."

At the next meeting of the Directors, held on May 4, Nicholson was appointed to the Board to fill the vacancy created by Bell's death. At last Northcliffe for the first time found himself absolutely free to be "Chief" and to see that The Times went his way. Both Buckle and Chirol realized that this must needs be so. Northcliffe in an ensuing conversation with Buckle, without suggesting his immediate retirement, asked him who in his opinion

would be the most competent man to succeed to the Editorship. Buckle named Geoffrey Dawson. His qualifications. Buckle said, were outstanding; his age was thirty-seven. Northcliffe was known to have a high opinion of him, but as he pressed for a second name Buckle mentioned Hugh Chisholm, the former Editor of the St. James's Gazette, who had come into The Times office to assist Sir Donald Wallace in preparing the extra volumes which constituted the tenth edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, and who subsequently himself edited the Cambridge, or eleventh, edition of that work. He was forty-five and possessed a knowledge of the book and news trade that Dawson did not rival. Northcliffe talked to Chisholm and without giving any promise led him to expect the appointment. He spoke similarly to Dawson. Buckle was adjured to spare himself as much detail as possible, write fewer letters with his own hand, devolve sub-editorial work upon others, and encouraged to concentrate upon editorship.

Northcliffe next conveyed his wish to Chirol that he desired certain changes to be made in the Foreign Department. This was by no means the first time Chirol had received a hint to this effect, but a firmer intention was now manifested. There was an additional reason. Steed had been invited to Sutton Place in May, 1911; generalities were discussed. The idea of further subdividing the Foreign Department, from which the Empire had already been rendered distinct, and constituting a European division, was mentioned. A suggestion thrown out by Northcliffe that Steed should come from Vienna to London and take charge was taken very seriously-by Steed. Northcliffe had, in fact, come merely to the conclusion that Steed's future ought to be settled, and that this might be a means of settling it. In May he was in the position of a full Correspondent whose resignation, given in 1908, was due to take place in 1910, but who had, at Bell's request, continued at work for a year longer. The situation was due to be dealt with, and it was discussed between Chirol and Buckle during the summer. In the meantime Northcliffe had not considered it necessary to tell either of these members of the Board of his conversation with Steed, and further delays in considering the matter were caused by Chirol's frequent absences. During the early part of the year he was in Russia and later went to India.

During Chirol's absence Buckle felt the increasing pressure to be almost more than he could bear. In June he made a firm protest to Nicholson. The occasion was the reproduction in the paper of a paragraph from *The Law Journal* favouring ratification.

June 23, 1911.

My dear Nicholson,

I am sorry Northcliffe should be upset over what seems to me a very small matter. It so happens that, in order to spare feelings which appear to me to be exaggerated, I had decided not to use the *Law Journal* par., which was brought to my notice; but, owing to a misunderstanding, the par. was only marked "over" and not distributed, and subsequently slipped in.

But I should have thought that, following Fitzgerald's strong letter in the other column, its publication showed impartiality, not bias.

I do not think you grasp my position (or, I think, Chirol's) in the matter. The reasons you give do weigh with me, and weigh considerably; but rather as causing me to regard Northcliffe's treatment of the Editor and the Paper in regard to it as not reasonable.

I hold that it would be decidedly better, on the merits, to ratify the agreement, though of course I admit that there are parts of it which I could wish altered, and provisions omitted which ought to be there. But I never heard of an agreement with a foreign country, still less of an international agreement, of which the same could not be said; and yet that does not prevent our entering into such Agreements.

That this is a rock ahead I am perfectly aware; and at present I do not see how next week is to be got through—seeing that Balfour speaks on Tuesday, and the Bills come on in Parliament on Wednesday. I have no desire for a crisis. The Paper is my life's work; I have never done anything else; and I know of nothing I could do if I leave it. But I cannot remain Editor with loss of my self-respect and it is sorely tried over this business. Even before this interference, not merely with editorial independence, but with the settled policy of the Paper, I had told Northcliffe that I felt doubtful whether, in the new conditions, it would not be better that I should retire and make way for a younger man of his own choice. He was good enough at the time to protest against the suggestion. But it has never been long out of my mind since, though Bell's death has naturally made me more reluctant, in the interests of the Paper, to take a step which would involve a further serious breach in its continuity.

Don't misunderstand me. With me, as with Bell, the Paper is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. But I could not put up with things which he endured.

This letter is as purely personal as yours was. I have always fully recognized that you have invariably used your opportunities in your difficult position to bring together the new wine and the old bottles, without producing an explosion. And you need never apologize for writing freely to me your mind about the Paper which we both serve, —at present.

Yours very truly,

G. E. BUCKLE.

### CHIROL'S RESIGNATION

Chirol, on his return in November, took the step he had been for some time meditating, which was, indeed, one of the reasons for his being away so much during 1910 and 1911. On December 21, 1911, he sent the Board his resignation from the direction of the Foreign Department. As he explained to Buckle. the Board had become a mere instrument of Northcliffe's will. On the 30th he wrote privately to Steed that he had done so and added: "I have not alluded to your own plans for the future, as I already consider myself for all practical purposes 'out of the picture." Nevertheless, Chirol's resignation did not take immediate effect. He had, as he rightly said, long ceased to count in the department, but he was loath to leave and no announcement was made. Steed was not communicated with officially and hence the year ended with Bell's understanding still in force: Steed should resign the Foreign Correspondentship and be fitted into the organization at P.H.S. The death of Bell, as Northcliffe had agreed during his talk with Steed in May, was not to mean that the latter part of the understanding should be abandoned. Steed, therefore, expected some official word from the Management to reach him. The expectation was natural enough, but Steed, nevertheless, was disinclined to leave Vienna in a hurry. A Balkan alliance against Turkey was, as Steed knew, taking shape; and a Balkan crisis was in sight.

But during recent months Steed's chances with Northcliffe had improved. In the autumn of 1911 he was asked to write a review of European affairs for the 1912 edition of the Daily Mail Year Book, due to be published in December, 1911. After consulting the office, which approved, Steed wrote it. The article, which was anonymous, dealt with the deeper causes of Continental friction, such as the international banking system. which, by a past programme of loans to Germany, had created, as Steed had long believed, an unstable heavy industry in that country, upon which a vast naval and military armament was enthroned. The whole thing was topheavy, and, so long as the loans were continued, and only so long, Germany was enabled not only to live but to arm beyond her means. Steed pointed out that, in such circumstances, any refusal to renew French loans to Germany must be followed by the gravest consequences. The article created a deep impression. Diplomatic inquiries, friendly and otherwise, were made at Carmelite House as to the authorship. The writer's reputation rose. Mr. J. L. Garvin in common with many others regarded Steed as the leading authority on central European politics. The Daily Mail Year Book article was of the first importance in his opinion, he told

Northcliffe. "I gave it to Bonar Law, who read it again and again, and mastered every word," Mr. Garvin also reported.

The wide respect accorded to this article excited Northcliffe's imagination with a new vision of the power his journals might exercise in European politics. From the second Boer war, ever since he had been a very young man, he had consistently championed the Empire. He first resisted French penetration in Africa and next the threat to Britain that he saw developing on the other side of the Rhine. Northcliffe had never entertained serious fears regarding the offensive might of France, but after 1908 he fully shared the general apprehension at the consequences of Germany's unlimited expansion of military and naval force and the plain evidence of her determination therewith to dominate the whole of European diplomacy. He was an enthusiast for the entente with France, and while the identity of the new Chief Proprietor of The Times was a secret to London, Clemenceau was aware of it and could rely upon the paper's continued support for a firm Anglo-French understanding. His attitude before and during the controversy over the Declaration of London is evidence that he early felt that German ambition must ultimately force a war upon the world. For some years he had considered it urgently necessary to warn the British public accordingly and, at the beginning of 1912, he was delighted to find a man possessing accurate and detailed knowledge of what he felt deeply, but only by instinct. Acquaintance with Steed encouraged Northcliffe to believe that with younger men in the office he and the paper could exercise a political influence useful to the country.

Meanwhile it had not been appreciated that while Nicholson's complete possession of Northcliffe's confidence and his own experience on the financial and management side were invaluable assets, they did not form, by themselves, a basis for the continuance of that direction which Bell, like MacDonald and Mowbray Morris, had always given to the Foreign Correspondents. Chirol, to Northcliffe's satisfaction and as Steed expected, had resigned; and, although he had not left the office, was now disinterested in the department. His resignation, by agreement with the Board, was arranged to take effect in March. No successor was named. The indecision contrasted strangely with "Old Bell's" methods. The gloom was deeper. The prospect of parting with an old colleague so soon after Bell's death increased Buckle's own sense of personal insecurity. Yet the threat to his own position seemed, on reflection, to be vague. Nicholson, though new, was happily a most agreeable colleague. Buckle, in an interval of absence of criticism, entertained the hope that he might edit the paper for

#### STEED'S POSITION

some time to come. Weeks passed peacefully. Still nothing had been said or done about Chirol's successor. As time went by the reason for the indecision became apparent: without a word of direction from Northcliffe, not a soul in the office was willing to risk a suggestion. And he had said no word to anybody, except to Nicholson, and all he had said to him was "Don't forget Steed."

The announcement of a knighthood for Chirol was published on January 1, 1912. In the same week Steed's acknowledgment of Chirol's letter announcing his resignation came to hand. It contained information that astonished the recipient. Steed informed Chirol that:

Lord Northcliffe told me last May that you had expressed a wish to retire from the "treadmill" in the course of 1912, and asked me whether I should then be prepared to take charge of "Europe" in the Foreign Department of the Paper. As I had not received from you any hint of your intentions, I could only answer that, in case you should carry out your wish and provided everything were first settled to your satisfaction so that I should not be placed in an invidious position in regard to you, I should be ready to accept his proposal.

... My plans for the future have not changed since we discussed them some three years ago, though they have naturally been affected by my acceptance of Lord Northcliffe's offer subject to a condition which, I am glad to hear from you, has now been fulfilled.

This, the first intimation of any proposal to create a European division forthwith became the subject of a conference. "I communicated it to my colleagues on the Board, & to them also apparently it was new. In fact they were under the impression that Lord N. contemplated making quite another suggestion to you," Chirol wrote to Steed on the 9th. He excused himself from further comment on the ground that he was no longer controlling the department. But after the Board Meeting Nicholson wrote officially to Steed that "as to the suggestions for your future work, it would be much better for you to run over here for a few days to discuss them than for us to begin a correspondence which might lead to misunderstandings." Buckle, in a note to Steed, also mentioned his ignorance of the suggestion. He went further.

That you had been offered and had accepted the "European Department" in *The Times* office was as new to me (& I believe to the rest of my colleagues) as it was to Chirol. As this position would necessarily involve a very confidential relation to the Editor, I could hardly fail to be cognisant of any definite arrangement made. I have always admired the brilliant quality of your work and your extensive knowledge of the European situation; & like others, I have been anxious that we should find some way of retaining your services for the paper.

Nicholson, who knew nothing at first hand about the origins of the "European" scheme, considered it prudent to sound Northcliffe, then in Paris. He received the following reply:

11 Jan 1912

My dear Reggie,

I feel extremely annoyed about the Steed matter. For the last three months I have been pointing out that this was coming on, but I have been put off with one pretext or another. Now, in the middle of my holiday, this thing is thrust upon me in the form of one of the usual Printing House Square muddles—a written discussion between people far apart from each other about somebody else's actions—Mine. This is exactly like the muddle of John Walter meeting Harold [Harmsworth] and Kennedy Jones.<sup>1</sup>

Such a muddle has never occurred in any other part of my business, and I wash my hands of any responsibility, except that I will not have Steed sacrificed to any Printing House Square intrigue. So far as I am concerned, you may take it from me that, if there is any attempt to carry on the old feuds about Steed, I will sacrifice Buckle, Chirol, Robin [i.e., Dawson], Grigg and the rest of them. Steed and Chirol do not like each other.

Steed has no right to use the word "offer" in regard to my conversation. I am not accustomed to make offers to people, as you know. He told me of his ill-treatment, of which I was well aware through Bell, who asked me to see Steed as far back as 1908 at Frankfurt and I promised to stand by him.

If you think you can settle the question yourself, do so; if not, I urge you in your own interest to have the whole matter deferred till I come back.

It is rather a shame that, while the vast businesses of Carmelite House have not disturbed me once, I should have this thrust upon me.

CHIEF

This letter, as ambiguous as it was threatening, was bound to harass Nicholson and through him others beside Buckle. The final paragraph was designed to remind Nicholson that *The Times*, a poverty-stricken paper, was a greater nuisance than the prosperous *Daily Mail*. Northcliffe, by this time, did not want it overlooked that the "classical" journalists, the "Gentlemen," the "Brethren," the "Old Gang," the "Monks," of Printing House Square whom he despised, depended for their jobs upon the money made by the "yellow" craftsmen at Carmelite House of whom he was proud. It was a situation that made the Chairman of the Company more determined to secure something better than a nominal position in the business. He renewed his attempts to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This concerned the Walter-Northcliffe agreement regarding the transfer of shares and the option to purchase which had been discussed since June, 1911, and was finally signed in January, 1913; see p. 739, supra.

### JOHN WALTER'S STATUS

secure an agreement by which his Preference Shares should be exchanged for Ordinary Shares possessing voting power. The delays and postponements which Northcliffe contrived strengthened his resolve; that, too, was bound to be the effect of the accumulating arrears of dividends. They would, in course of time, aggregate a sum that would become decidedly inconvenient if the business failed to pay. And it would undoubtedly be extremely difficult to renew the spirit and staff of the paper without spending money. For some time capital expense would have to be shouldered. Perhaps, Northcliffe came to admit, it might be better to get rid of the arrears by bringing Walter inif by doing so he could strengthen the fabric of the business without weakening his own paramount position. Nothing however was done in this direction at the beginning of the New Year. Walter could not be given a decisive answer while Northcliffe was on holiday for an indefinite period in Paris.

The holiday was a source of embarrassment also to Nicholson. Something had to be done about the Foreign Department after Northcliffe's threatening letter of the 11th. On the 18th the Board promoted Braham, with the title of "Foreign Assistant Editor." All that was done about Steed was the passing of a resolution that his future be discussed between himself and the Manager. Steed duly received a telegram on the 20th asking him to come to London for a conference in the following week. He did not accept the suggestion. He had nothing from Northcliffe in writing and nothing more from Bell than a mere statement that efforts would be made to fit him into the organization at P.H.S. Hence, pleading ill health and his doctor's advice, he said that he could not travel "for the present." If this were not enough, he added that Austrian political events made his absence undesirable. Aehrenthal was reported to be dangerously ill (he died in fact on February 17) and so Steed considered it inexpedient to leave. He concluded by asking Nicholson whether, in the meantime, he could give his ideas "as to my 'future work' so . that I may have time to consider them fully before we meet for verbal discussion?" Nicholson's answer on the 22nd regretted Steed's influenza and hoped to see him in London as soon as he could manage to come over. Meanwhile Steed's position was the subject of talks in the office. Opinions about him were mixed. It was agreed that he was a brilliant observer and writer, an industrious and loyal colleague, but from 1908 the office had found him less easy to deal with. It was doubted whether he would be patient under the routine of the office and finally whether his appointment to a leading position in P.H.S. would be

politically desirable. Chirol, whose opinion on such a point would deservedly carry great weight with Buckle, naturally had clear ideas on the general subject of European transfers. He had a natural wish, also, to maintain in his retirement a measure of contact with his successor, whomsoever it should be; and this would be less convenient with Steed in a position of power over the European correspondence and with influence over leading articles. The continuity of foreign policy in The Times, so far as it was a principle worth considering, hinged upon the personality of Chirol's successor. The ground taken by powerful influences at the Foreign Office in July, 1908, to secure, as has been described, the reversal of the plan to move Steed from Vienna to Berlin was that he was something of a "firebrand." It was further alleged that if he were appointed to Paris the "Entente Cordiale would not last five minutes," as if Steed had not been a constant supporter of the entente. Steed took little or no notice of these criticisms, and not knowing their source looked upon them as originating in the gossip of Saunders and Lavino. In the absence of any serious inquiry into the truth of these statements about Steed's discretion, the Foreign Office view took root in the office and in 1911 the substance of Chirol's opinion of Steed was that he was too individualistic in judgment to be a good name. In all probability Chirol would have designated Saunders as his successor, and failing him, Braham.

The time taken by Buckle and Chirol and by the Board in discussing these matters gave Nicholson an interval during which he communicated with Northcliffe. If Steed had "no right" to use the word "offer," what had he a right to? How important was it for Northcliffe to flout the combined judgment of Buckle "and the rest of them" in order to pay off some old score against Chirol?

Northcliffe's answer came, according to his custom when handwriting, in black lead pencil in steeply inclined lines of fast, contracted scribble, running across and up several sheets of small scrap-paper. The wording of the letter, though not lacking in the formal expression of friendliness and even of affection, was arousing. The tone was stormy:

[page 1]

[January, 1912]

Entering 5th year of my Times work

My dear Reg

This Steed business of which I have spoken any time these four long & fruitless years & repeatedly during 1911 brings me to a point in my relations with "The Times" when I am going to have no more of it.

1 See pp. 646-9, supra.

### NORTHCLIFFE THREATENS NICHOLSON

Apart from the fact that the control is completely out of hand, that I am responsible for that which I do not control, that the paper is, so far as the life blood of a newspaper, circulation [is concerned], exactly where it was in Jan 1908, there has long been borne in upon me the knowledge that my own age and energy are not on the

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up grade and that if I wish to make "The Times" what I mean to I must begin to act, & if you wish to continue to work with me, you must.

Exactly why you allow Chirol to continue to use y[ou] I do not know. He has resigned. He has & will have I can assure you nothing to do with my affairs.

You either settle the Steed matter or I will greatly strengthen my position in the office by changes I have in mind.

I write plainly because you are forgetting the lapse of

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time & always seem unduly pleased that these people occasionally do what you wish, with very bad grace often as not. Let Chirol at once know that he has nothing to do with the paper, is my final advice.

I have no plans of return. I am more annoyed than I can say that my repeated warnings have been of no avail. I see that the paper is pulled this way, that way & the other, that intrigues are allowed to continue, & notorious old feuds;

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that I shall be called upon for a very large sum within 12 months, and that the perfectly mechanical correspondence of the Paris office (which can be equally well got by sending a copy of the "Temps" by the 4 p.m. train) is typical of half the departments—run by individuals for their own comfort, or dignity, or knighthoods, or War Office blackmail, or Canonries. The old bright Paris correspondence, where is it???

[page 5]

If you do not feel strong enough for the whole task please tell me so. If you are strong enough, get Steed over & settle it yourself, but no correspondence, & then get to work & master the whole situation. If anybody dissents do please assert yourself & get rid of him.

If you are not strong enough I am going to deal with the situation in an entirely different way

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towards which my mind has been turning during 1911. But I want to hear no more of it. Either you can or you cannot get my very proper wishes carried out.

The Steed incident will begin to prove it.

I have written plainly & after much reflection. I am not at all ungrateful for yr. vy. hd. work & efforts, but this is 1912.

CHIEF

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### P.S. Steed is a newsgetter & xcllent writer.

Steed was cajoled into remaining with Times against superior offers known to me. He is tri-lingual, knows Central & Eastern European & Italian politics better than any other writer xcept Wilton. He should be given Berlin, Paris or the position of Grigg in the office as regards Europe. I infinitely prefer the latter & it is my wish. If the others

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wish to continue Chirol hostility, founded on grounds well known to me, get rid of them. That course never seems to occur to you. Steed will work directly with me, if he is in London, not with them. He will get news. They have not, combined, got one piece of news in 4 years & news must be got if the paper is to go on. [end]

Thus imperiously put upon his mettle, Nicholson acted promptly. Chirol retired on February 28. Thus went, after 20 years, one of the most able and industrious of the servants of The Times and one of the most familiar in international circles. Valentine Chirol was of medium height and slight figure. His appearance, as a young man, was neat, almost spruce; a pointed beard, reddish in colour, handsomely set off a fresh complexion and blue eyes. His education abroad was doubtless responsible in the first instance for his having chosen international affairs as the field of his profession. He took himself, the responsibilities of a commentator upon foreign policy, and his personal position in the world of diplomacy, with equal seriousness. Although a tendency towards earnestness cut him off from casual human intercourse, he was a fluent and good talker in congenial company. He was no wit, though he was not without some humour. Chronic ill-health and an acute self-consciousness rendered him extremely sensitive in a vocation whose unremitting urgency puts a premium upon inconsiderateness. Even Bell, alone of his colleagues to avoid friction with him, found him difficult, perverse in argument and apt to take offence without cause. Chirol was, in fact, morbidly suspicious and secretive. His trick of looking round, and about, all the time he spoke, had the effect of worrying his colleagues; there seemed to be no repose about him. This restlessness, however, did not make him inconstant; he kept for a lifetime friends outside the office, Lascelles and Spring Rice. Both recognized the impossibility for him of thinking without feeling. A difference of opinion was never an intellectual matter

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> An inexplicable inclusion, since Wilton had specialized on Russian affairs and had never visited Italy.

merely. The Dreyfus case wore him into a pitiable state of outraged sensibility. He could hardly rest while the case was undecided, and never forgave Flanagan for once doubting the Jew's innocence. Chirol's vivid imagination acted so violently and painfully on his sensitive nerves that he came to fear sleep. He was, in fact, made for another sort of career than journalism and another sort of office than a newspaper's. Chirol seldom alluded to the fact, and never to the circumstances, of his leaving the Foreign Office in 1876. His abrupt resignation after four vears in the Service left him with the necessity of earning his living without providing him with the means of doing so outside the foreign service of a newspaper. It was a disappointment which the effect of an unhappy childhood rendered increasingly bitter, and his knighthood in 1912 and his rejoining the Foreign Office during the War of 1914-1918 came too late to remove it. As he grew older he became more sensitive, more introspective and more inclined to self-pity. But at his best period Chirol was a hard worker. He possessed an intimate knowledge of affairs not merely of Europe, but of the Middle-East, Persia, India, China and Japan.

The office was now dependent upon Braham and Steed. The arrangement made was that Steed should return to Vienna for the purpose of clearing up his work there, take, if he chose, a busman's holiday in Eastern Europe and then to work in London from December 1, 1912. In the vague and loose manner characteristic of the place, Dawson came to be looked upon, rather than recognized, as Buckle's successor.

It was fortunate indeed, Buckle thought, that a happy end to Walter's negotiations with Northcliffe was not out of the question. The relations between Walter and Northcliffe were, in fact. notably improving. During May and June they met, and on several occasions discussed the future of the paper. Walter again pointed out, as he had done in the previous year, that his career, unlike Northcliffe's, was limited to The Times; in consequence, that he was the more interested in its well-being from the national, journalistic and financial points of view. He was prepared, therefore, to throw his heart and soul into any agreed plans for the restoration of the paper's prestige and profits. Northcliffe had said that he was delighted that a Walter should take a leading part in the fashioning, and in the execution. of the policy of and for The Times-provided it was his policy. At the end of June the heads of an agreement between him and Walter were drafted.

The Editorial Department saw the agreement as the virtual equivalent of a step back to the old dispensation and to the old "atmosphere" made dear to Buckle by two decades, for him and Chirol, if not for Bell, of tranquillity. To Buckle, who never forgot that he was appointed by John Walter III, and never faltered in his loyalty to the family, the news was especially welcome. "You become thereby the man with the second largest holding in the paper, comparable with, though less than, Northcliffe's, thus going a long way towards winning back your hereditary position. Once more I congratulate you, & trust that you may eventually become what your ancestors were, the largest & controlling Proprietors." Buckle had great hopes for the paper and for himself from the new agreement.

It was, indeed, a very important matter, as Northcliffe was fully aware. What had been suggested by Walter in June, 1910, abandoned as the result of the advice of Jones and others in 1911, and had at last been agreed to in June, 1912, provided:

- (1) for the abandonment of Bell's litigation against the executors of A. F. Walter on account of Item No. 7, i.e., the old Sibley claim on the alleged excessive printing profits of the pre-Northcliffe period.
- (2) that John Walter should renounce all claim to arrears of interest on his second preference shares.
- (3) that £30,000 new working capital should be found by John Walter and other ordinary share-holders.
- (4) that this should be done by wiping out the second preference shares altogether and creating 170,000 new ordinary shares of which John Walter should receive 140,000 as fully paid while the remaining 30,000 should be taken at par by the ordinary shareholders, John Walter included.

It was further agreed that in the event of Northcliffe's death Walter should have the right to purchase the whole or part of his present holding. Thus, for so long as Northcliffe held the controlling number of Ordinary Shares, Walter bound himself to vote with him, in exchange for the option to purchase the whole or part of his shares upon his death. For this consideration Walter undertook to support Northcliffe's policy. These, then, were the articles accepted by both parties in June, 1912, although the agreement itself was not to be signed until January, 1913, when certain important additions were incorporated. But it was agreement upon these heads, from June, 1912, that laid the material basis for a cordial feeling and future united policy towards the paper on the part of Northcliffe and Walter

and drew from Buckle his congratulations and his aspiration that John Walter would eventually become the Chief Proprietor.

An early consequence of the cooperation of the two Chief Proprietors was a request to the Editor that he should visit Walter for a talk about the future of the paper. Buckle duly came to lunch on July 7 at the table at which he had sat in the time of John Walter III. In the course of conversation the Editor alluded to the length of his service. He was proceeding to talk of the future, of the absence of need to make any fundamental change in the Editorial Department, indeed of the undesirability of doing so at all so soon after the retirement of Chirol, when, to his amazement, Walter seized the opportunity to remind him of Buckle's own wish, more than once expressed, and urged him to consider retiring. He said he believed that for some time past Buckle had retained the position from a sense of duty to the paper, emerging as it was from a critical period, rather than from any personal satisfaction he derived from it. Walter was concluding with the suggestion that Buckle might consider leaving in the coming autumn when he was interrupted. As Buckle later admitted, he was "very sore and greatly upset" at the turn which Walter had given to the conversation. He admitted that he had once or twice spoken of resignation, but the circumstances were not now what they were; the effect upon the public of further changes had to be thought of. Proceeding, he said that the possibility of a Walter putting it to him that he should resign had never for a moment crossed his mind; equally, he never expected that any Walter, in order to reconcile his interests with Northcliffe's, would offer to sacrifice his Editor; that if Walter had been instructed by Northcliffe to extract his resignation he would prefer to be in direct communication; that, in fact, he would ask Northcliffe direct for an explanation; and finally that he felt he must disregard Walter's suggestion until he had received a reply. It was a disagreeable lunch.

Upon returning to his room, Buckle wrote to Northcliffe, inquiring if Walter was acting as the result of an instruction or message from him. "I have sent no 'message' as to your retirement," Northcliffe replied; "Mr. Walter has told me that you had repeatedly suggested that you were contemplating resignation. You have said so to me." He added that the tone of Buckle's letter was regrettable and said he was "in entire accord" with Walter. On July 12 the conversation with Walter was resumed. Buckle apologized for his suspicions. The principle of the Editor's retirement being accepted, Walter came to details. The

remainder of this conversation was almost as disagreeable as its predecessor. Buckle, after all, was only fifty-eight years of age. Was there any immediate hurry? Was there a successor? Had he been appointed? Walter answered that Northcliffe and he were agreed that Dawson should succeed as Editor. Buckle was delighted at the nomination, but desired for him, as for any new man, longer contact with the "atmosphere" of *The Times* office. Incidentally, that would give Buckle another year or two.

But after four years Northcliffe felt free. The absence of Bell and Chirol encouraged him. If Buckle followed, a team of young, vigorous, unspoiled men would bring in a new and bracing air in place of the old "atmosphere" and the real "rehabilitation" of the paper would begin. It was overdue. The paper's average daily sale in 1908, when Northcliffe came into the office, was only 38,000. It was a mere 47,000 in 1911. There was no prospect of an increase if the paper stood still editorially. Walter, therefore, proceeded to say that it was desired to make the appointment effective in the autumn.

The ground being thus cleared, Dawson was officially informed by Walter on July 28 that he was to succeed to the Editorship and assume responsibility from the beginning of September. On July 31, Buckle's letter of resignation, handed to Walter and addressed to the Chairman of the Directors, was read to the Board, he himself being absent. The directors learnt that the Editor was deferring to the wishes of the Proprietors, "although after Mr. Bell's death and Sir Valentine Chirol's retirement, I had myself thought that the interests of the paper would be promoted by my continuance as Editor a year or two longer." This, as has been seen, was not the view of Northcliffe and Walter, who thought that The Times needed to be placed, without delay, under the editorship of a man of an age to be forward—not backward—looking, possessing the right education and experience. and adequately equipped, in the contemporary journalistic sense. for the task of cooperating with a new drive to recover its prestige. He should certainly be familiar with the mechanism of the paper in all its departments, but it was no advantage to him to be exposed to what Buckle revered as the "atmosphere of the office." On the contrary, it was a positive disadvantage. Northcliffe advised the new Editor "to keep out of P.H.S. circles as much as possible," to avoid contact with that "superabundance of obstructive & destructive criticism at P.H.S. mostly proceeding from ignorance & the cloistered life." If, as he was determined, the paper was to progress in the New Year the old "atmosphere" must be avoided like the plague. For more than a generation, Northeliffe advised the new Editor, the paper had been decaying: "I have always said that *The Times* of the last forty years had as its mottoes 'Abandon Scope all ye who enter here' and 'News, like Wine, improves by keeping." Dawson was strongly advised to "ignore all existing prejudices and opinions." He was to form his own judgment. The new and bracing circumambience which Northeliffe thought essential to the revival of *The Times* was nothing like the old "atmosphere of the office," to the preservation of which Buckle attached so much importance. With the new Editor in office, there was to be fresh air and a fresh programme.

Other changes in conformity were pending. An end, threatened Northcliffe, was to be put to "the priggish slackness that has permeated P.H.S. ever since Delane was in his dotage." That was the object of his campaign, Northcliffe frankly announced. The formal special articles, the solid foreign dispatches and measured leading articles, natural for hereditary reasons to the Walters, Buckle and Bell, were all unendurable to a new man who all his life had loved brevity for its own sake. Anything that had the length necessary to a convincing piece of exposition or reasoning must be "dull." By 1912 Northcliffe's health, no less than his taste, forbade close reading. All he demanded from the printed page was news. He had ceased to be interested in the past of The Times. Northcliffe had forgotten the achievements in newsgetting since Delane, of Power in the Sudan, of Lionel James in South Africa and in the Far East. He gave The Times no credit for the work of Wallace, Chirol, Lavino, Saunders or Bourchier. By 1912 Thursfield's History of the paper had made no progress and Northcliffe's interest in the History of The Times was limited to the four years that had passed since he had become responsible for the property. Now that he had an Editor of his own choice he would bid him lighten the paper, make it easier to read, by concentrating upon news. That, Northcliffe insisted, was the way his Evening News and his Daily Mail had been made successful.

The "Old Gang" of *The Times* had never understood that the securing and presentation of news was the proper business of a newspaper. The "Old Gang" had edited and published a diplomatic gazette, a university register, a court circular; but *The Times* had not been a newspaper since Barnes and Delane. This was a natural view for Northcliffe to take. Northcliffe understood all about news, how to get it and how to display it. It was

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his speciality and he had developed his news sense to the point of genius. He had come to believe in news and nothing but news. His genius fell short of understanding how necessary it was for *The Times* to print not only news but a view of what the news meant.

It is a valid criticism of the "Old Gang" that they had not realized that they were in the habit of valuing news according to the demands and interests of a governing class too narrowly defined for the twentieth century. Arthur Walter was determined to continue The Times on the "old lines"; Bell was convinced by experience that The Times so conducted needed a subsidy. He provided for it by his contract with Hooper and Jackson. In his four years Northcliffe had not succeeded in making the paper pay, though he had ended their contract. Northcliffe, for all his genius had, so far, only "saved" The Times from Hooper and from Pearson. The circulation had risen by 10,000 copies only and the total figure was a mere 47,400; the advertisement revenue after the cancellation of the Hooper and Jackson contracts had declined. The Times that had been saved from Hooper and from Pearson had still to be "saved from bankruptcy." The task of the new Editor and the "New Gang" was a huge one; nothing less than to redesign the paper and to make it pay without recourse to dictionaries, atlases or encyclopaedias.

The old Editor informed his friends that he was leaving and vacated the editorial chair in August and not long afterwards left England for an extended tour in South Africa. A notice of the change of Editor appeared in *The Times* of August 8. The new Editor who was on holiday in August and returned towards the end of September was thus welcomed by the "Chief":

Our task is great & worthy. If we get the barnacle-covered whale off the rocks & safely into deep water while we are comparatively young we may be able to keep it there until we discover others who can carry on the work.

The new Editor at once assumed responsibility. The first issue of *The Times* under the editorship of Geoffrey Dawson was published on September 24, 1912.

How Northcliffe, in his pride and confidence as the greatest newspaper-man the trade had known, took the most hazardous gamble that can be taken with any newspaper property, and brought the "barnacle-covered whale" off the financial rocks; and how the "Greybeards" and "Monks" of Printing House Square risked their positions by disputing with him for the preservation of the character of "The Thunderer," as it had been set by John Walter II and Thomas Barnes, and for the continuity of the tradition established by John Walter III and John Thadeus Delane, is told in the fourth and final volume of this History.

# APPENDIX I: SOURCES

The following tables, supplementing the references to the authorities quoted, are designed to assist the reader to control the statements made in the text and, at certain points, to amplify them.

B.M.=British Museum, London; B.N.=Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; C.U.L.= Cambridge University Library; P.R.O.=Public Record Office, London; P.H.S.= Printing House Square.

The principal manuscript authority for this volume is provided by the collections in P.H.S. While they are more extensive than for the earlier period, G. E. Buckle's habit of destroying his correspondence has deprived them of valuable material. Moreover, Buckle at no time preserved copies of his outgoing letters. More fortunately, C. F. Moberly Bell, as a commercially trained and systematic correspondent, continued the practice of his predecessors, Mowbray Morris and J. C. MacDonald, and kept a letterbook, press-copied from manuscript (see below). Mackenzie Wallace and Valentine Chirol did the same. Bell and Chirol, for certain reasons, were apt to conduct correspondence from their respective residences. This material, generally speaking, has been lost. The following are the principal classes of correspondence relating to the period covered by this volume that have been used; they are arranged chronologically in files:

- Buckle's Diaries: Delane's practice of keeping an office diary limited to the recording of the names of the writers of leading articles and of certain other "special" contributors was continued by Chenery and Buckle. The series from 1884 to 1912 has been used in this Volume.
- The Foreign Department's Letter-books exist from 1891 to 1899 (Wallace) and from 1899 to 1910 (Chirol). The series includes out-letters to Moberly Bell (Cairo), Blowitz (Paris), Bourchier (Balkans), Chirol (Berlin), Saunders (Berlin), Steed (Berlin, Rome, Vienna), Stillman (Rome).
- The Manager's Letter-books exist from 1884 to 1889 (MacDonald), from 1890 to 1911 (Bell) and from 1911 to 1912 (Nicholson). From 1893 the typewriter was used but it was ten years before Bell had the bulk of his correspondence typewritten and to the last day of his life he insisted on writing important or specially interesting letters by hand. Correspondence was press-copied in the old manner until 1915, when it was superseded by the practice of copying by carbon.
- P.H.S. Papers, other than of the managerial or foreign departments, are almost entirely limited to a few letters and telegrams addressed to Buckle or his assistants. A mass of letters addressed to Bell remain. These have been arranged chronologically in order of subject, home and foreign, alphabetically in order of country. They concern, principally, the salaries and conditions of work of Foreign correspondents, but touch incidentally upon the policy of the paper towards the respective country. A small number of foreign in-letters addressed to Buckle have survived, also a larger number addressed to Wallace and Chirol.
- In addition a mass of material exists which it has not yet been possible to sort into groups. This accounts for the omission in various footnotes of a key reference. They are to be found in a large deed box, numbered "40".
- Northcliffe Papers. By the permission of Sir George Sutton, Bt. and Mr. Henry Arnholz, Literary Executors of the late Lord Northcliffe, *The Times* has been given access to the whole of the documents relating to the paper. They are extensive from 1910.
- Sutton Papers. A deed box containing correspondence between Northcliffe and A. F. Walter, John Walter, Moberly Bell, Reginald Nicholson; memoranda, &c. The whole, dealing with the period 1908-1912, lent by Sir George Sutton, Bt.
- The Times Publishing Company, Limited's Papers include the first Minute Book (1908-1912), the First Preference Share Ledger and the Balance Sheets from the foundation of the Company. P.H.S. accounts were controlled by Bell and made up according to the general practice of his predecessors. Northcliffe's story that he kept them in an exercise book is apocryphal; but, like the Walters, Bell was

#### APPENDIX I: SOURCES

indisposed to spend largely upon filing cabinets and all the rest of the apparatus required by modern commercial habit. Bell's accounts consisted (A) of weekly figures (entered upon quarto printed blanks) relating to revenue arising from Advertising and Sales of Copies; Costs of Paper, Press-work and Composition; Fixed Charges. (B) of a folio Ledger summarizing monthly and annually the Revenue and Expenditure from "A". After 1908 the practice was gradually modified by professional accountants and brought into line with the standards prevailing in the City.

The Walter Papers include correspondence and memoranda of John Walter III, A. F. Walter, John Walter and Ralph Walter. Draft agreements with Godfrey Walter, Hooper and Jackson, C. A. Pearson, General Sterling; manuscript and printed documents in the case of Sibley v. Walter form the bulk of the collection, and there remain letters from Bell, Hooper, Northcliffe, addressed to A. F. Walter and John Walter.

Ralph Walter Papers include financial memoranda, correspondence with Kennedy Jones, Wickham Steed and John Walter.

Principal printed works used outside the diplomatic archives, which need not be listed (see you Wegerer below), include the Dictionary of National Biography and:

Bell, Enid Moberly: Life and Letters of C. F. Moberly Bell. (London, 1927.)

Brett, Maurice V.: Journal and Letters of Reginald Viscount Esher. (3 vols., London, 1934.)

Langer, W. L.: European Alliances and Alianments. (New York, 1931.) Diplomacy of Imperialism. (2 vols., Harvard, 1935.)

von Wegerer, Alfred: Bibliographie zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges. (Berlin, 1934.) Ward, A. W., and Gooch, G. P.: Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy. (3 vols., Cambridge, 1922-23.)

#### Newspapers

The principal contemporary morning newspapers read include the Morning Post, Daily Telegraph, The Standard, Daily News, and among evening papers, the Pall Mall Gazette, St. James's Gazette, Westminster Gazette. For the proprietors, editors and policies of the journals of the period, see table to be printed in the appendix to Vol. IV completing this work.

## I. G. E. BUCKLE, EDITOR FROM 1884

Manuscript

Buckle's Diaries, as listed above.

Memoranda by John Walter IV and G. E. Buckle written in 1932-1933.

Printed

Blunt, Wilfrid Scawen: Secret History of the English Occupation of Egypt. (London, 1907.)

Frequent reference to Algernon ("Button") Bourke, with an exaggeration of his influence at P.H.S.

Elwall, Alfred: "The Times, No. 32,543" . . . preparé et annoté pour les classes supérieures des hautes écoles de commerce. (Paris, 1888.)

## II. EMPIRE AND IMPERIALISM: GORDON

Manuscript

Moberly Bell Papers.

Moberly Bell's Egyptian diaries for 1883-85: Bell notes on April 22, 1884: "Egerton maintains Times does not represent public opinion but provincial papers do so more nearly. He takes in Scotsman, Newcastle paper (Cowan's) and Manchester paper, last is hot for intervention, first dead against it, prepared to make sacrifices, even a little honour too. Says bulk of people don't care for Sudan. No, but for Gordon—well perhaps. I say that in Gordon Times have struck note which, true or not, represents public opinion. . . My own idea that Times has extraordinary influence just now. All said about difference Delaine [sic] and Chenery notwithstanding C. had as much influence and did as well considering the altered position of journalism."

Moberly Bell's Egyptian Letter-books, 1865-90: A series of letters from Evelyn Baring (Lord Cromer) to Bell, covering the period 1882-1910. Cromer and Bell had different sources of information, which they often shared. Bell seems to have been the only newspaper correspondent in Cairo to whom Cromer showed

official telegrams from Khartoum. (cf. The Times, January 10, 1884.)

### EMPIRE AND IMPERIALISM: GORDON

Granville Papers in P.R.O., G. and D., 29/153, T. H. Sanderson to Buckle. MacDonald's Letter-books.

P.H.S. Archives: The dispatches published in *The Times* on September 29, 1884, were carried by messengers (together with official papers from Gordon) via Kassala to Massowah, whence Mason Bey sent them by hand on September 27 to Suakin to be telegraphed to Bell in Cairo. Mason had the original dispatches forwarded to Bell, and they are now at P.H.S. They consist of three pieces of thin paper measuring approximately 6½ by 10½ inches, 2½ by 7½ inches, and 2½ by 6½ inches, closely but legibly written in ink. The earliest message, dated April 27, 1884 (incorrectly printed in *The Times* as April 28) bears the impression of a blue stamp with Arabic lettering and is endorsed in Gordon's hand: "Send this C. G. Gordon."

Four letters written by Power to Bell, dated January 18, February 7, 9 and 12, 1884; Letter from Mason Bey to Bell, September 26, 1884; three letters from Nubar Pasha to Moberly Bell, 1884 (two) and 1895; eight letters from Evelyn Baring (Lord Cromer) to Bell, dated 1890-91, purchased in 1939. This correspondence shows that after Bell left, Gorst for a short period represented *The Times* in Cairo, but found it impossible to reconcile the work with his official duties. Baring suggested (December 25, 1890): "I believe Miss Shaw is on your staff now. She would do well, probably better than any man—but I don't know if this would suit you," and wrote again on January 15, 1891: "Miss Shaw's work is well done (I thought you would want her at home)."

Lt.-Col. J. D. H. Stewart's Diary: Stewart sent his Khartoum diary in portions to Baring in Cairo, whence it was forwarded to Lord Granville and eventually bound up chronologically with Baring's dispatches. The diary, as now preserved in the P.R.O., covers the period January 18 to March 11, 1884. There are only two references to Power: February 22, 1884 "... Colonel Coëtlogon left for Cairo by Dahabiyeh. He was delighted to get away, and asked Power to come with him." (P.R.O., F.O. 78/3668.) Friday, March 7 "... During the evening discussion with General Gordon as to how far an officer in employ of Government was justified in writing to papers. Times Correspondent sent long letter of Gordon's views to Times. Gordon also telegraphed resignation if his views were not carried out." (P.R.O., F.O. 78/3669.)

#### Printed

Allen, Bernard M.: Gordon and the Sudan. (London, 1931.)

Dr. Allen has made extensive use of Government papers made available at the Public Record Office to the public for the first time in April, 1930. There are many references to Power and Moberly Bell. Dr. Allen was able to decipher a telegram in the P.R.O. in which Gordon requested Cromer to get Moberly Bell to cancel Power's dispatch (*The Times*, March 10, 1884), if Cromer disapproved of its publication; and at the same time to accept his resignation in favour of Col. Stewart (see Gordon and the Sudan, pp. 298-9).

Bell, E. H. C. Moberly: Life and Letters of C. F. Moberly Bell. (London, 1927.)

Blunt, Wilfrid Scawen: Secret History of the English Occupation of Egypt. (London, 1907.)

Mr. Blunt and "The Times." A memorandum as to the attitude of The Times Newspaper in Egyptian affairs, printed as a separate appendix in connection with the second edition of Mr. Blunt's Secret History of the English Occupation of Egypt. (London, 1907.)

Gordon at Khartoum. (London, 1911.)

My Diaries, 1888-1914 (2 vols., London, 1919 and 1920.)

These four works contain many references to *The Times* and its editorial staff, but as Blunt's remarks are coloured by his agreement or disagreement with the editorial policy they do not add much to the paper's inner history. Throughout, especially in the *Secret History* which ends in 1882 with the trial of Arabi, Blunt pays tribute to the exceptional political influence of *The Times*, misguided though he considered it to be when it conflicted with his own plans. Blunt found Chenery sympathetic towards some of his campaigns on behalf of the Arabs, but imagined he was thwarted by the financial and City interests which "dictated" the paper's policy. His animosity against Moberly Bell was almost feverish. He considered him solely responsible for the journal's consistent attempts to strengthen the British administration in Egypt. *Mr. Blunt and* "The Times" is mainly devoted to this theme. Bell is depicted as a member of "the alien Levantine society... which in Alexandria, more than anywhere else, lives far removed from the higher life of native Egypt, having its dealings only with the parasites of Western civilization, and judging all native things according to the standards of the Stock Exchange". While Blunt denounces Bell for unscrupulous, systematic distortion of fact in the interests of British finance and Imperialism, he himself boasts that he procured the insertion of false information in *The Times (Secret History*, p. 433) to further Arabi's cause.

#### APPENDIX I: SOURCES

Blunt's cousin, the Hon. Algernon Bourke (1854-1922) (see Sources, Chapter I) brought social and political news to Buckle during the 'eighties but Blunt exaggerates his influence and importance.

Boulger, Demetrius C.: Life of Gordon. (London, 1897.)

Buchan, John: Gordon at Khartoum. (London, 1934.)

Buckle, G. E.: Letters of Queen Victoria, 2nd series, Vol. III. (London, 1928.)

Chirol, Valentine: The Egyptian Problem. (London, 1920.)

Cromer, Lord: Modern Egypt. (2 vols., London, 1908.)

The main responsibility for sending Gordon to Khartoum is placed upon the English Press: "The people of England, as represented by the Press, insisted on sending General Gordon to the Sudan, and accordingly to the Sudan he was sent." (I, pp. 434-5.) Cromer reveals that Power's report of his official interview with Gordon on the controversial subject of Zebehr (*The Times*, March 10, 1884) was submitted to him by Moberly Bell before the correspondent decided to transmit it to P.H.S. (I, p. 515.)

Documents Diplomatiques Français, 1ère série, tome V.

Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond: Life of 2nd Earl Granville. (London, 1905.)

Gordon, Maj.-Gen. C. G.: Journals of Major-General C. G. Gordon at Khartoum, (London, 1885.)

Letters of General C. G. Gordon to his sister, M. A. Gordon. (London, 1888.)

Holland, Bernard: Life of 8th Duke of Devonshire. (London, 1911.)

Morley, John: Life of W. E. Gladstone. (3 vols., London, 1903.)

Power, Frank: Letters from Khartoum. (London, 1885.)

Adds vivid details to Power's published dispatches. Last letter dated March 6, 1884. Power sent his dispatches from Khartoum to Cairo, for Bell to forward at his discretion. At first he kept Bell informed with general news letters, but on November 1, 1883, his first cable appeared in The Times. After Khartoum was closely invested, Bell sometimes withheld mutilated messages or others arriving out of sequence, giving their gist in his own telegrams. Power's messages came through regularly until the rebels cut the telegraph wires at the beginning of February. The wires were repaired within a fortnight, but were cut down again about March 12, 1884. After that, communication depended on messengers getting through the enemy's lines to Berber. The normal time for the post between Khartoum and Berber was nine days. The Times received five messages in this way, comprising twelve separate dispatches, the last (dated "Khartoum, April 7") being published on April 17. Nothing more came through from Khartoum for five months. Bell telegraphed from Alexandria on May 18 (The Times, May 19) that the latest dispatch from Power was dated "Khartoum, April 8" and left Berber on April 18, but the facts were correctly given in the leading article of September 29, 1884: "The last despatch received from our Correspondent at Khartoum was published on the 17th of April." The leading article marked the publication of three more dispatches from Power, dated April 28, July 30 and July 31. The April dispatch refers to "my last telegram to you on April 21," but this never arrived. The dispatch of July 31 says: "I wrote you several times each week up to April 23, when all hopes of men getting through to Berber had ceased." These final dispatches came via Kassala and Massowah to Suakin, whence they were cabled to Cairo. The following list shows the dates on which Power's dispatches from Khartoum appeared in The Times:

1883—November 1, 23, 27, 29; December 4, 6, 7, 11, 15, 18, 24, 25, 29; 1884—January 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 31; February 4, 16 (reports wires had been cut), 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28; March 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 17, 22 (headed "By Post to Berber"), 31; April 1, 10 and 17 (containing messages dated Khartoum, April 2 and 7); September 29 (containing messages dated Khartoum, April 28, July 30 and July 31).

The articles on "The Sudan," published on September 19 and 20 and October 1, 1883, under the heading "From a Military Correspondent, Khartoum," appear to have been written by Colonel Farqubar, but there is no conclusive evidence of their authorship.

# III. PARNELLISM AND CRIME

Manuscript

Preserved in P.H.S. is correspondence between John Walter, MacDonald and Buckle; also between John Walter and Soames; John Walter and Balfour on the setting-up of the Special Commission; MacDonald and W. H. Smith re consulting the Test Book of the House; MacDonald and Webster concerning Counsel for The Times. MacDonald's

### PARNELLISM AND CRIME

Letter-books of that period are still in existence. Arthur Fraser Walter's Papers include various memoranda written in March and April, 1889, with particular reference to the Special Commission. A "Memorandum on the Letters" by John Walter is thus introduced: "Violent attacks having been made by Sir William Harcourt and others upon the conductors of *The Times* on account of the publication of the facsimile letter, I beg leave to subjoin the following statement of my own connection with the affair." There is a further memorandum entitled "Circumstances concerning the publication not disclosed in Mr. Walter's statement." A statement by MacDonald prepared for the Special Commission regarding his meetings with Houston and the purchases of the letters by *The Times.* A long statement written ca 1935 by Houston describes his part in the events which led up to the Special Commission. The detailed and full Report of George Smith Inglis, professional expert in handwriting and facsimilist, 8, Red Lion Square, Holborn, examines the seven letters signed "Chas. S. Parnell."

The Pigott Letters, i.e., those supplied by Pigott purporting to be from Parnell, Egan, &c., are among the Walter Papers. They include the first letters, five from Parnell and Egan, followed by a sixth from Egan, which were brought to The Times in the autumn of 1886 by Houston and subsequently purchased for £1,780—Houston's expenses in obtaining them, of which £500 was for the purchase of the letters themselves; also two Parnell letters of June 16, 1882, and one from Egan to Carey, for which Houston was paid £550 in 1888 when the paper was satisfied as to their genuineness. The third batch, brought to P.H.S. shortly afterwards and purchased for £200 consisted of three letters—one from Egan (October 5, 1880), one from O'Kelly, and one from Davitt. Few of the letters are written from an address or are dated, or possess any other indication than the day of the week. In most cases they are not addressed to anyone by name. In sum, the documents, genuine or otherwise, consist of:

I. Chas. S. Parnell to E. January 9, 1882. (This was known as the No. 1 or "Kilmainham" letter.)

What are these fellows waiting for? This inaction is inexcusable. Our best

men are in prison, and nothing is being done.

Let there be an end of this hesitency. Prompt action is called for. You undertook to make it hot for old Forster and Co. Let us have some evidence of your power to do so.

My health is good, thanks.

II. Chas. S. Parnell. May 15, 1882. (This was the letter, known as No. 2, reproduced in facsimile in *The Times* on April 18, 1887.)

I am not surprised at your friend's anger, but he and you should know that to denounce the murders was the only course open to us. To do that promptly was plainly our best policy. But you can tell him, and all others concerned, that though I regret the accident of Lord F. Cavendish's death, I cannot refuse to admit that Burke got no more than his deserts. You are at liberty to show him this, and others whom you can trust also, but let not my address be known. He can write to House of Commons.

III. Chas. S. Parnell. Tuesday.

Tell B. to write to me direct. Have not yet received the papers.

IV. Chas. S. Parnell. Tuesday.

Send full particulars. What amount does he want? Other letter to hand.

V. Chas. S. Parnell. Tuesday.

I see no objection to your giving the amount asked for. There is not the least likelehood (sic) of what you are apprehensive of happening.

VI. Chas. S. Parnell. June 16, 1882.

I shall always be anxious to have the good will of your friends but why do they impugn my motives! I could not consent to the conditions they would impose but I accept the entire responsibility for what we have done.

VII. Chas. S. Parnell. June 16, 1882.

I am sure you will feel that I could not appear in Parliament in the face of this thing unless I condemned it. Our position there is always difficult to maintain; it would be untenable but for the course we took. That is the truth. I can say no more.

VIII. Patrick Egan. Tuesday.

I had a conversation with Mr. Parnell on Saturday last in reference to the subject of a further advance of £50 and while anxious to consent he regrets that it is not in his power to manage the matter just now. As I explained to you the funds are low. Is there no other source from which the amount could be obtained?

IX. P. Egan. February 24, 1881.

Write under cover to Madame J. Rouyer 99 Avenue de Villiers. Mr. Parnell is here and will remain for about a week. I have spoken to him about further advance

for the 'A' fund, he has no objection and you may count upon it. All goes well. We have met Mr. O'L and other friends who are here and all are agreed that prompt and decisive action is called for.

X. P. Egan. Paris, June 10, 1881.

I am in receipt of your note of 8th instant and am writing Mr. P. fully in the matter. He will doubtless communicate with you himself.

XI. P. Egan. June 18, 1881.

Your two letters of 12th and 15th insts. are duly to hand and I am also in receipt of communications from Mr. Parnell informing me that he has acted upon my suggestion and accepted the offer made by B. You had better at once proceed to Dundalk so that there may be no time lost.

XII. P. Egan. March 8, 1882.

Your presence in the west is urgently asked for, the thing must be done promptly. Send reply to address already given you.

XIII. P. Egan. March 11, 1882.

As I understand your letter which reached me to-day you cannot act as directed unless I forward you money by Monday next. Well here is £50, more if required. Under existing circumstances what you suggest would not be entertained.

XIV. P. Egan to Jas. Carey, Esq. October 25, 1881.

I have by this post sent M. two hundred pounds he will give you what you want. When will you undertake to get to work and give us value for our money?

XV. P. Egan. Offices-City Bakery, Store Street, Dublin. Oct. 5, 1880.

I hereby undertake on the conditions stated in your note of this date to pay F. the sum of two hundred pounds stg on his undertaking henceforward to withdraw opposition to the Land League and the Land Agitation.

XVI. Matthew Davitt.

Assures "Dear Friend" that his fears are groundless, and says that the "Blackthorn Argument" of the "Ould times" is played out, and that he himself never hesitates to lay aside his "Nationalist Faith" when prudent.

XVII. James O'Kelly to Egan.

He considers it poor requital for his sacrifices and services to have his motives misrepresented. He thinks a new policy requisite at home because of changed conditions.

XVIII. A letter from Parnell to Pigott was handed to MacDonald by Houston before the O'Donnell case and was retained by him for about a year. He treated it as a confidential communication not to be shown to experts and even Soames did not see it until the lapse of a considerable interval. Without address or date it was as follows:

Dear Sir,

I am leaving for Cork to-morrow morning but should be glad to see you sometime today if you will fix an hour convenient to yourself to call.

Just at this moment and for an hour or two I shall be engaged on matters of pressing importance.

Yours truly,

CHAS. S. PARNELL.

Richard Pigott, Esq.

P.H.S. Papers include letters from those wishing to subscribe to a possible Parnell Fund to recoup or indemnify *The Times*. Other letters suggested a United Kingdom Memorial Offering to *The Times* to purchase a suitable work of art and commemorative tablet or a monument to be erected as a testimony of the gratitude of the nation. There are also many letters written after the Commission in which readers put forward their theories for, or evidence of their belief in, the genuineness of all the Pigott Letters. Belief in the genuineness of the letters persisted for years. Thus on November 14, 1893, Soames wrote to John Walter (P.H.S. Papers):

The following are some of the facts stated shortly which were corroborative of the letters but which in consequence of the course which was followed we were precluded giving in evidence

As to the Kilmainham [i.e. No. I]:

We were told this was brought out of prison on the day it was dated by a particular man I went to the prison asked to see the book which I was told could

### PARNELLISM AND CRIME

not be got at because it with others had been stored away However I was promised it should be searched for and the next day I saw it I found that this man did visit Parnell on that day and was allowed to see him without the presence of a warder A further search proved that this was the only visit he paid to the prison This letter was written in blue ink on foreign or foreign looking note paper I asked the Governor with what paper and ink he served the suspects He told me ordinary paper and Morells black ink On my asking if any of them used any other kind of paper or ink he replied immediately Yes Parnell used blue ink and blue foreign paper and then and there produced specimens of Parnells handwriting in blue During the preliminary proceedings of Mr. O'Donnells action he produced an admittedly genuine letter of Parnells which bore date the selfsame day as our Kilmainham letter It was written in the same blue ink and on precisely similar paper as ours. When Le Caron was in the witness box he produced the photograph he received from Parnell from Kilmainham It was enclosed in similar paper and subscribed with the same ink This paper was as a fact supplied to Parnell by a firm of stationers in Dublin and at the time of the supposed forgery it was not possible to obtain any of it I should have mentioned that Parnells Kilmainham visitor was a Fenian who escaped from the hands of the Police and is believed to have died in Brussels.

As to the "facsimile letter" [i.e. No. II]

produced in *The Times* This was written on good paper having a peculiar water mark. It took me sometime before I could find the maker. Ultimately I ascertained that this paper had been manufactured by Messrs. Pirie exclusively for the firm of McSweeney in Dublin who on their part sold it only to the Dublin land league Messrs. Pirie had ceased to make this paper for some years before Pigott is alleged to have forged the letter. It is curious if the letters were forgeries that Pigott should have known what paper Parnell was at the time in the habit of using and should have been able to obtain it though the manufacture had long ceased and that he was able to give as the bearer of one of the letters the name of a man who did as a fact visit Parnell on the day of its date.

## Printed

The Times, March 7, 1887-December 1, 1887, containing the series of special articles:

March 7, 1887. Parnellism and Crime. I-A Retrospect: Ireland [J. Woulfe Flanagan]

sums up Parnell's warning that the choice lay between the League and the Invincibles and that there was no alternative. It suggests that "Mr. Parnell has gauged the nation by the chiefs of its late Government. The miraculous conversions among the Liberal Cabinet have for once misled his judgment." Reference is made to the men who, having made the League their special study, charged Parnell and his colleagues "with treason, murder and rapine" in the plenitude of official knowledge and who now "co-operate with the League organizers, and profess implicit faith in their past innocence, their future loyalty and moderation". But all English statesmen do not possess the "flexibility of adaptation" distinctive of the Gladstonians. The article promises to "trace the main outlines of the [Land League] movement, illustrate its principles and its working, prove that it is essentially a foreign conspiracy and demonstrate that its chief authors have been, and are, in intimate, notorious, and continuous relations with avowed murderers". Extracts from speeches of "high officials" of the organization in Ireland and of "obscurer ruffians" are given.

March 10, 1887. Parnellism and Crime. II-A Retrospect: America [Flanagan]

shows how the so-called "constitutional movement" in the United Kingdom is linked to its fellow conspiracy in the United States, with extracts from the "Irish World," "United Ireland," &c. It gives American methods of "spreading the light" in Ireland—funds, subscriptions, violence, &c., and alludes to Parnell's imprisonment and release (October 13, 1881-May 2, 1882); the Phoenix Park murders (May 6, 1882); the informer Carey; and the exodus of patriots (to America) under the Crimes Act.

March 14, 1887. Parnellism and Crime. III—A Study in Contemporary Conspiracy [Flanagan]

shows that the "distinguished representatives" at home continuously maintained their relations with "the murderers who fied and the murderers who harbour them" in America. The article draws in many quotations and extracts to show the conversion of Fenians to outward acquiescence in a constitutional movement and the founding (in April, 1883) of the Irish National League of America; happenings at business meetings and conventions and social gatherings in America are described; Parnell's temporary quarrel with Patrick Ford, Editor of the Irish World, is noticed; also the reception of Parnell's delegates on their visit to America.

April 12, 1887. The National League at Work [Flanagan]

examines the means by which the National League had deliberately "forced the Government to fall back on coercion" i.e., outrage, boycotting, tyranny, intimidation. "It is a more serious danger for a man to offend against the law of the Land League than against the law of the country." Examples are given and thus the difficulties made plain of those who would pay rent; even tenants who paid secretly by night and refused receipt were found out and punished. The methods of enforcing adherence to the League are described. The article agrees that the law is "utterly helpless" in parts of the country and speaks of the infamy of tolerating tyranny such as that practised by the League.

April 18, 1887. The reproduction of the Parnell letter, i.e. No. II with an introductory article [by Flanagan and others].

April 20, 1887. Mr. Parnell's Explanations. [Flanagan.]

Every detail of Parnell's criticism of his signature to the "facsimile letter" is considered.

May 13, 1887. Parnellism and Crime. Behind the Scenes in America I. [Robert Anderson.]

Secret records of American conspirators had been secured which *The Times* thought desirable, without further delay, to place before the public in a series of articles.

The first deals with the Fenian Brotherhood (established in America to subsidise and aid the Irish Association founded by James Stephens under the title of the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood); the first Convention of the United Brotherhood (publicly known as the Clan-na-gael and offshoot of the Fenian Brotherhood); the ninth General Convention of the United Brotherhood in 1879; the Land League (founded 1880 with the "New Departure" programme); the United Brotherhood Convention in August, 1881; and the Irish National Convention (public) in November, 1881.

May 20, 1887. Parnellism and Crime. Behind the Scenes in America II. [Anderson.]

The Irish National Convention at the end of November, 1881, was "wire-pulled" by the United Brotherhood, as shown by the Executive Bureau Secret Circular of January 3, 1882. The second Irish American National Convention, held in April, 1883, was enjoined by Parnell to frame its platform so "as to enable us to continue to accept help from America". It was again controlled by the United Brotherhood who were instrumental in dissolving the Land League. So was founded the Irish National League of America, the "public organization" with the United Brotherhood Fenian Society as the "ruling and directing organization".

June 1, 1887. Parnellism and Crime. Behind the Scenes in America III. [Anderson.]

Extracts from secret circulars prove that the United Brotherhood were steadily pursuing the same policy of outrage and at the same time, by the usual methods, had secured control of the second Irish National League of America Convention in August, 1884. The next Convention was eventually held in August, 1887, and the Egan-Sullivan faction of the United Brotherhood maintained their control of the League. But there had been secession from the ranks which had reformed as a separate society. After the secret congress of the United Brotherhood which followed on the close of the League Convention, the society reorganized under the name of the I.N.B., the title of Clan-na-gael and United Brotherhood being relegated to the seceding branch. The Council of the Fenian Brotherhood determines to resume active operations.

This article was the last in the series designed to disclose in some measure the secret history of the New Departure Compact.

The Working of the League. [W. T. Kirkpatrick]

- 1. August 8, 1887. The view of Gladstonians and Parnellites that the crime in Ireland did not justify exceptionally repressive measures, and that in fact Ireland is at the present moment singularly free from outrage is hardly consistent with the statistics of agrarian outrages. The first article gives examples of the system of tyranny and intimidation which has for so long prevailed in Ireland under the National League.
- August 10, 1887. Cites examples of the League's interference to prevent any solution of the land question by the methods already provided by the Legislature.
- III. September 6, 1887. The branches of the League have been preparing for the enforcement of the Crimes Act by passing defiant resolutions, declaring their intention to resist it at all hazards. Examples of resolutions are given; also reports of "land grabbers" and "grass grabbers" and of people summoned before local branches for the smallest breaches of the unwritten law.

#### THE PRESS AND THE PARTIES

- IV. September 26, 1887. More reports and resolutions from the League branches expressing defiance of the Crimes Act, condemning the Land Act, denouncing land grabbers, &c., and calling on everyone to join and to send in subscriptions. An element of caution was noticeable in the League's deliberations.
- V. October 14, 1887. The action of the Government had resulted in many of the League branch gatherings being hole-and-corner affairs. Resolutions passed are for the most part of a blustering nature but examples also show that in the effort to break up the Land League organization, the Government had undertaken no easy task.
- November 8, 1887. The Irish and American Parnellites on Themselves. [Flanagan.]

Mr. Gladstone at a recent meeting had announced a change of mind about the Parnellites. They had, he proceeded to assure the civilized world, in fact, abandoned their principles of 1881. The article maintains there cannot be the shadow of doubt that the Nationalist organization and the American paymasters are bent on separation; and that it is not the Parnellites who have swallowed their principles. Quotations, not twelve months old, mainly from the Freeman's Journal, are given for the purposes of comparing their own plain and unmistakable words with the doctrines of 1881 and with Gladstone's description of their present opinions.

December 1, 1887. An Irish-American on "The Nottingham Compromise". [Flanagan.]

Mr. Gladstone had urged Home Rule because it promised a final settlement of the Irish problem. Davitt's lecture at Limerick had shown that this it could not be. An article in the *Irish World* on "Mr. Gladstone's Finalities" is also quoted—"There can be no finality except justice, and Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule plan is but a small instalment of justice to Ireland" &c. The Irish-Americans connived the 1886 "compromise" but only as a step towards separation and are determined to hold Mr. Parnell to his word and to force him to go on struggling for the destruction of "the last link which keeps England bound to Ireland".

The Special Commission Act, 1888. Report of Proceedings before the Commission Appointed by the Act. Reprinted from The Times, 1890, in four volumes. (London, 1890.)

The Commission lasted from October 22, 1888, to November 22, 1889, and the Judges' Report was issued on February 13, 1890. Vol. IV includes the Report of the Judges.

O'Donnell v. Walter and Another.

The Times reports of the trial which lasted from July 2-5, 1888.

Parnell v. Walter and Another.

The Times law reports of the action culminating in the "Verdict by Consent" in The Times of February 4, 1890.

Anderson, Robert: Sidelights on the Home Rule Movement. (London, 1906.)

Pages 144ff. for the Special Commission. Sir Robert Anderson (p. 135) alleges that if the "facsimile letter" was a forgery, "it was concocted for the purposes, not of *The Times*, but of the extremists among the Land Leaguers who were both scared and exasperated by Parnell's public denunciation of the murder".

Askwith, Lord: Lord James of Hereford. (London, 1930.)

O'Brien, R. Barry: The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell, 1846-1891. (2 vols., London, 1898.)

Parnell, John Howard: Charles Stewart Parnell. A Memoir. (London, Constable and Co., Ltd., 1916.)

# IV. THE PRESS AND THE PARTIES

Bourne, H. R. Fox: English Newspapers. (2 vols., London, 1887.)

Chisholm, Hugh: "Newspapers in Great Britain" in Encyclopaedia Britannica, XI ed. (Cambridge, 1910-1911.)

Dilnot, George: Romance of the Amalgamated Press. (London, 1925.)

The story of the foundation of Answers is told in Chapters II and III. "It was George Augustus Sala who solemnly warned young Alfred Harmsworth against adopting journalism as a career. That advice was backed no less emphatically by the then Editor of the Morning Post, Sir William Hardman." Harmsworth's connexion with James Henderson at the age of 16, and with Ingram (Illustrated London News) who offered him his first Editorship—Youth—are described; also his own offer to

take employment with Newnes. Mr. Dilnot tells the story of the association with W. Dugarville Carr and their shilling books; but, it may be added, "The All About Series" was published under the dual imprint of Carr & Co., of 26, Paternoster Square, and "Tit-Bits" offices, Burleigh Street, Strand. The "Prefatory Note" to [Alfred Harmsworth's] A Thousand Ways to Earn a Living, invites correspondence addressed to either address. The volume includes reproductions of the covers of the first numbers of Answers to Correspondents, Home Chat, Sunday Companion, and Harmsworth Magazine. The volume was brought out by Sir George Sutton, Bt., in 1925, as a tribute to the memory of Lord Northcliffe and may be regarded as an authoritative account of the rise of popular illustrated periodical journalism.

Greenwood, Frederick: "Birth and Infancy of the Pall Mall Gazette" in the 10,000th number of the newspaper, April 14, 1897.

Mackenzie, F. A.: The Mystery of the "Daily Mail" 1896-1921. (London, 1921.)

Morison, Stanley: The English Newspaper. (Cambridge, 1932.)

Northcliffe, Lord: The Rise of the "Daily Mail". (London, 1916.)

O'Connor, T. P.: "The New Journalism" in The New Review, I, October, 1889.

"Beyond doubt we are on the eve of a new departure in English journalism." The main point of difference between the old style and the new is "the more personal tone"—formerly, full reports of speeches were given but nothing was said of how they were delivered, how received, or of the personality of the speaker. (p. 423.) "But then, it will be said, . . . no one's life is now private. . . . " This is a real danger—"gossip should be always good humoured, kindly and free from political or other bias". (p. 429.) "One of the most common fallacies among those outside newspaper offices is that a paper is read solely for its politics." (p. 429.) O'Connor, as a party man, expresses himself as against "independence" politically—"A journal should be founded to advance definite and distinct principles, and should cleave to these principles." (p. 433.) The "conditions in which newspapers are read necessitate expression in the strongest and most striking fashion".

The position now occupied solely by opinion in the leading articles in *The Times* was formerly shared by the most important news of the day. Here and nowhere else *The Times* announced in 1812 the murder of the Prime Minister; inevitably also such shocking news was accompanied by comment. During the crisis which followed the paper gave what happened and what might happen, stated what it had heard and also what it advocated. This was done indiscriminately either in brief paragraphs or in long "leaders". But at this period the leading article was not the "fighting" part of the paper. It was elsewhere, under such a signature as that of "Vetus" (see Vol. I of this work), that the policy with which *The Times* chose to identify itself was consistently, though not day-by-day, advocated. The writer of these letters, Edward Sterling, was residing at Cardiff and his compositions could have small news-value. But they did, at first, pronounce upon policy. In those days, the leading article, or rather what was presented in its place, gave news rather than views.

A change came when letters to the Editor on the model of "Vetus" were no longer the mode, and the news paragraphs, e.g., those of 1812, were merged with paragraphs pronouncing upon policy. By 1834 political crises were given treatment very different from that they would have received twenty years earlier. Thomas Barnes, in order to fashion the leading article into a political instrument, combined news and views into a polemical whole. Nevertheless, it may be said that even in Barnes's day news held the first place, both in the body of the paper and in the leading article. When he had a startling piece of information to publish he would put it at the head of the leader column, sometimes even without comment, in high eighteenth-century style. Thus the news of Melbourne's resignation on November 15, 1834, appeared as a simple paragraph in that position. Indeed, while under Barnes the leading article may have established itself as a regular medium of political influence, it cannot be said that it was inevitably and invariably the focus of the paper. Days went by without editorial comment. Neither the form nor the number of "leaders" had become conventionalized or even sharply differentiated from the rest of the paper; foreign news-letters might precede or succeed an expression of opinion without, as nowadays, being distinguished typographically. Only by the closing years of Barnes's life may it be said that the matter and form of the leader had become fixed as a statement or exposition of opinion. Thereafter, news only appeared in "leaders" when it came from confidential sources.

It is not easy to determine how far these developments in the form of the leading article were due to conscious editorial policy. On July 3, 1846, Delane thought that a leader was the correct place in which to put a list of the probable Cabinet; but by 1852 (December 25) a hypothetical list of the same sort was printed in a separate column. In December, 1845, the startling announcement of Peel's conversion to Corn Law Repeal was given as the first paragraph of a leading article (thus occupying the same place as

## THE PRESS AND THE PARTIES

Barnes's 1834 announcement, the only difference being that the later news was not an isolated paragraph); so for years after 1850 the leader column was frequently the only place in which news was printed. By about 1850 the publication every day of four articles was the practice. Changes in the make-up had divorced the leader page from the rest of the paper. The first of the leaders began immediately under the masthead, and if the last ended short the column was filled with brief paragraphs. Thus the leading article was differentiated in appearance from the news. The use of the leader as medium of publishing confidential information suited Delane particularly well. He made a habit of using rather than announcing his "exclusives" and his "revelations". He could never report the interview between the Queen and Granville in June, 1859; but he could "wrap it up," as Granville used to say, in a well-informed leader. In this example the wrapping was rather transparent, with consequences embarrassing to the statesman. Disraeli's account of what took place when Lord Derby was summoned to form a Ministry was the basis of a leading article which took the line that the statements made were common knowledge. Thus would Delane disdain revelations at the time he was making them. On the day before this leader, February 22, 1858, Delane followed the practice inaugurated in 1852 of forecasting the new Ministry under a separate heading in an adjacent column. Delane had no "political correspondent"; no "diplomatic correspondent". He did that sort of work too well himself. It was natural therefore that all his unique information of what went on in Cabinet and in the private meetings of statesmen should "ooze out," as Brougham would say, in leading articles. Delane's practice was followed by Chenery. During the difficulties which succeeded the resignation of Beaconsfield in 1880, *The Times* was well, though perhaps not to a startling degree, informed of the progress of the negotiations between Gladstone, Hartington and Granville. These events, too, were chronicled only in the leader column, where alone the reader of The Times could learn that Hartington had been summoned to Windsor (April 22) and that Gladstone was to be Prime Minister (April 24).

Buckle's coming on the scene coincided with what amounted to a revolutionary change in practice. When Gladstone resigned in June, 1885, The Times followed the resulting situation by daily paragraphs headed "Political Situation" and the leading articles were limited purely to comment. The reason was that Buckle enjoyed nothing like Barnes's and Delane's intimate knowledge of political personalities. He could not manipulate the leader in their way. The break was soon manifest and Buckle provided a new journalistic form, i.e., contributions from the "Political Correspondent" were not yet so named, but their germ may be found in the paragraphs of 1885. It had the advantage of giving the news a measure of display. This was the form and position accorded to the news when Buckle learnt, in circumstances that permitted publicity, of Randolph Churchill's resignation at the end of the following year. It was published as a paragraph on the leader page under the title "Resignation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer"; throughout the crisis which followed *The Times* published a daily paragraph upon "the Political Crisis," which gave all the news, sometimes exceptionally well informed. With the arrival of the political correspondent there was no longer any place for news in leaders. The separate man, was, in any case, separately paid. The leading article was thus perforce limited to comment upon the news stated elsewhere, and this is its normal function at the present day. On February 11, 1887, *The Times* displayed in tabular form a list of the day's contents. Italic capitals were alternated with roman in fourteen "decks" separated by rules. Crossheads came soon afterwards. Apart from these, the editorial columns of *The Times* made no concession to modern make-up until 1914 (see Vol. IV).

#### Stead, W. T.: A Journalist on Journalism. (London, 1891.)

Newspapers are viewed as part of the vast national agora for discussing the affairs of State and the Editor as the representative of the people daily elected by the payment of pennies. "A journalist is, or ought to be, a perpetual note of interrogation.".. "No one is too exalted to be interviewed, no one too humble."... "Everything that is of human interest is of interest to the Press.".. Sensationalism is justified so far as it is necessary to catch the public eye, retain attention and compel action... "All that it has been is but a shadow going before of the substance which it may yet possess, when all our people have learned to read, and the Press is directed by men with the instinct and capacity of government."

The concluding article "Wanted a new Times" finds that mental paralysis induced by uninterrupted prosperity is the cause of "The Thunderer's" dwindling power. "Like an effete Monarchy, which, in all the panoply of its traditional glories, awaits its destruction at the first blow of the Revolution, it has held its place by the force of use and wont." The country is a larger entity than it was in the days when Printing House Square enjoyed a monopoly. Stead insists upon a revision of the paper's attitude towards Ireland and its becoming truly "national," by which he means "in the broadest sense Imperial, for Englishmen in Manitoba, in the Cape, and in Australia are as much members of the nation as if they were still living in Kent or in Ulster" (p. 85). Stead elsewhere expresses his faith in "God's Englishmen" (p. 90) in words that would have been applauded by Moberly Bell. At

the beginning of the book he champions the New Journalism and at the end he laments "the Decadence of the Press". A "new Times" would be the best inspiration for England and the Empire. Stead's outlook is so obviously over-earnest that his criticism could hardly have touched The Times.

Traill, H. D.: "The Evening Newspaper" in the Pall Mall Gazette, April 14, 1897.

"Our Fifty Years of Leadership" in The Evening News, August 31, 1944.

The leading article of the issue for August 31, 1894, states that "yesterday afternoon at four o'clock *The Evening News* passed into the hands of a new proprietary.... The Chairman of the new company is Mr. Alfred C. Harmsworth, who, with his brother, Mr. Harold Harmsworth, is well known to the public as the founder of *Answers* and several other periodicals".

Whyte, Frederic: The Life of W. T. Stead, Vol. I. (London, 1925.)

"The revolution [in the Pall Mall Gazette] from the Morley regime is not so very noticeable" (p. 104) but there was an increased number of interviews and the headlines more unconventional; above all there were "escapades" such as the (1) Agitation in October, 1883, for improved housing of the poor; (2) Circular to all Liberal M.P.s (December, 1883); (3) Gordon interview (January 9, 1884); (4) Truth about the Navy (Autumn, 1884); (5) Imperial federation effort (January, 1885); (6) Appeal for arbitration over Penjdeh (May, 1885); culminating in (7) Maiden Tribute (July 6—November, 1885). Regarding the last. Stead wrote from Prison, November, 1885: "It is in God's hands, and if He cannot use me and the P.M.G., He will use someone else" (p. 210). Mr. Whyte quotes (p. 320) aptly from Miss Friedrichs' Life of Newnes, Newnes's remarks: "There is one kind of journalism," he said, "which directs the affairs of nations; it makes and unmakes Cabinets, it upsets Governments, builds up Navies, and does many other great things. It is magnificent. It is your journalism. There is another kind of journalism which has no great ambitions. It is content to plod on, year after year, giving wholesome and harmless entertainment to crowds of hard-working people craving for a little fun and amusement. It is quite humble and unpretentious. That is my journalism." . . . According to Stead, one noteworthy sentence is here omitted from Newnes's little speech. Newnes had added—with good reason—that his kind of journalism brought in 'the shekels'."

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1841 1880 1887	John Easthope, M.P. Bart. Algernon Bathurst, Kt Algernon Bathurst, Bart	a 11 1		Political services.  Before he was M.P.  Chairman of Met. Unionist M.P.s.
1895 1885 1892	Algernon (Glenesk), Baron Wm. Hardman, Kt George Armstrong, Bart	C		No allusion to Press.  Services to Unionist Party.
1892 1892 1903	H. H. Gibbs, Baron E. L. Lawson, Bart E. L. (Burnham), Baron	Salisbury Gladstone Balfour	•	services to Unionist Party.
1894	Wemyss Reid, Kt			Services to literature and politics.
1895	W. H. Russell, Kt	Rosebery .	٠	(Who always thought his Crimea services insuffi- ciently recognized.)
1895	George Newnes, Bart	Rosebery .		Party services.
1903	Alfred Harmsworth, Bart	Balfour .		
1905	Alfred (Northcliffe), Baron Alfred (Northcliffe), Viscount	Balfour Balfour		
1912	Valentine Chirol, Kt			For promoting Minto- Morley reforms.

In September, 1892, Henry Yates Thompson complained that the Liberal Party were backward as Press Managers. They despise the Press. "Mr. Gladston might easily have kept the *Chronicle* and probably the *Telegraph* if he had baroneted Lloyd and Lawson; and if they had ever done anything for me I don't suppose I should be selling now." (J. Saxon Mills, *Sir Edward Cook* 1921, p. 115-6.)

At the end of 1865 rumours of Lord John Russell's attempt to get rid of Delane were in circulation. The plan was to give John Walter III a peerage (Dasent II, 160; History of The Times II, 397; Free Press, February, 1866). In 1878 there were rumours that Walter had been offered and had accepted a peerage (Truth, August 15, 1878; History of The Times II, 521; Cf. J. C. MacDonald's letter begging Walter not to accept; August 26, 1878, Walter Papers). There is no evidence to support the entry of Algernon West "Walter of The Times was pressing hard for a Peerage" (A. West, Diaries, July, 1878, p. 39).

# VI. A FOREIGN DEPARTMENT UNDER WALLACE

Busch, Moritz: Bismarck, Some Secret Pages of his History. (3 vols., London, 1898.)

The English translation of Busch was sponsored by *The Times* as one of Bell's expedients for raising money and the negotiations with Busch were carried out by Lavino. Much of the translation was undertaken by Chirol. A large portion of the original German in Busch's hand remains in P.H.S. Reference to Blowitz in vol. 2 in connexion with Gortschakoff.

Chirol, Valentine: Fifty Years in a Changing World. (London, 1927.)

Here Chirol gives a few details of his birth, May 28, 1852, and descent on his father's side from a French Huguenot ancestry. The family gave two generations of pastors to the French Protestant Church in London. His father, the Reverend Alexander Chirol, was an Anglican clergyman, curate of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, when he and his mother, who was an Ashburnham, both joined the Catholic Church. The father later reverted to Anglicanism, but the son, christened Ignatius Valentine, was educated in part in Catholic schools. The critical attitude towards Catholicism which coloured his thinking and writing was adopted during the Dreyfus case. At the Foreign Office he spent four years "or I should now penitently admit, misspent them" (p. 21). They came to an end in 1876. Chapter XX, "Berlin in the Early Days of William," recounts that he first met Bell in Egypt when he was himself Cairo Correspondent of the Standard. Chirol took up residence in Berlin at the beginning of May, 1892 (p. 265); rather, according to Bell's Letter-book (M.B. 5/495—561) at the end of July. His introduction to Holstein by Colonel Swaine (p. 268), "one of the few foreigners he ever saw," is not dated, but presumably occurred promptly in view of Chirol's friendship with the British Ambassador, Sir Charles Malet.

De Blowitz, Henri Stephan Opper: "Reminiscences of a Journalist" in Contemporary Review, February, 1893.

At p. 234 there is an account of the Bismarck-Arnim incident in 1874 and the campaign of the Journal des Débats against Holstein. Blowitz was called upon by Rudolphe Lindau, of the German Embassy, who brought with him a document justifying Holstein, whose defence was undertaken by Blowitz in the Journal; and it ceased its attacks, upon which Holstein visited Blowitz on January 8, 1875, and thanked him. "We talked for some time of his personal situation. I told him myself I was just then in a critical place, not surely knowing whether or not I should succeed Hardman as chief Correspondent of The Times... Some days after this, i.e., January 16, a friendly hand sent me a letter of Holstein sixteen pages octavo in length entirely written and signed by the Baron's hand. Addressed to one of the most intimate friends of Mr. John Delane, editor of The Times, it denounced me as quite under the thumb of the Duc de Cazes and as willingly ignoring and concealing from my readers an Orleanist plot for a coup d'État. In this letter The Times was urged to send to Paris a clever impartial person to keep them au courant." Blowitz says he kept Holstein's letter for eighteen years.

Lowe, Charles: Prince Bismarck: An Historical Biography. (2 vols., London, 1885.)

The beginnings of the criticism of The Times which became systematic in the German Press after 1900 may be traced as early as the Congress of Berlin and the resultant Russo-German friction. Prof. Carroll (Germany and the Great Powers, 1938, p. 155) quotes The Times on Bismarck's policy, and his reply (p. 199) through the Norddeutsche Zeitung that the purpose of *The Times* was to divide Germany from Russia. Prof. Carroll also refers (p. 199) to the "anglophobia" of the Kölnische Zeitung as described by The Times correspondent in Berlin on August 19, 1884. Dislike of The Times strengthened in 1890, when the nationalist papers like the National-Zeitung, Hamburgischer Korrespondent took umbrage at the expression by the paper of its fears in connexion with the entry of Emin into German service. The National-Zeitung (April 11, 1890) alleged that the German Liberal Press, with its anti-colonial bias, had deliberately provoked this British reaction by exaggerating the importance of the incident; while the Hamburg journal (April 3, 1890) discovered in The Times evidence of the motive which was so often alleged in after years: British jealousy and fear of German competition. The Vossische Zeitung, true to its Liberal programme, opposed colonial expansion and was afraid that Emin's expedition might occasion friction with England; but even this journal, though generally at this time anglophile, thinks that The Times goes too far, and deems it necessary to warn Printing House Square that it is inappropriate to use the same language to Germany as to Portugal (April 3, 1890, eve).

Before Chirol and Saunders, Blowitz was the most quoted and most hated correspondent of *The Times*, and up to the end of 1895 the only one ever referred to in the German Press by name: the war-scare of 1875 and several other incidents before 1890 were

not forgotten. In April, 1890, Blowitz caused a new sensation and much annoyance in the German Press by his reports of the end of the Triple Alliance and a new German-British-Russian alliance. In consequence, Blowitz was presented to readers of the German Press as the "great master of the guild of manufacturers of political sensations". The Vossische Zeitung (April 13, 1890) is very displeased with The Times for saying that after Bismarck's resignation leadership in the Triple Alliance might well pass to Austria. The suggestion was by no means unpleasing to the Austrians. Deym assured Kálnoky that The Times correspondent, Brinsley Richards (predecessor of Lavino), was right in thinking that "the Austro-Hungarian Cabinet will take the foremost place in the Triple Alliance and on many occasions it will prove necessary for you to take over the job of leader which you might have left to Prince Bismarck had he been still at the helm". Deym's observation was approvingly minuted by the Emperor Franz Joseph: "This letter seems to contain much that is correct." (Deym to Kálnoky, April 9, 1890; Temperley and Penson, Docs., pp. 464-5. The correspondence would have interested Achrenthal.)

In September, 1890, English Press reports about the slave-trade in German East Africa brought a violent reaction in Germany; and, although little is made of the incident in later historical writings, it ranks as the first instance of that exacerbated journalistic warfare, of which the comments on the Jameson Raid are typical. It became more bitter during the Boer War and has since been elevated by German and American historians to the level of a cause of the first world war. The Kölnische Zeitung's earliest impression (September 17, 1890; 1st morning edition) was that in Zanzibar certain Englishmen of extreme anti-German leanings were bent upon discrediting German colonial enterprise at all costs. Other instances—which at the time passed with little or no comment in the Press—are now quoted as evidence. The Times, according to the Vossische Zeitung (evening, September 24, 1890), is, in this respect, the mouthpiece of the British East Africa Company. The agitation raged for over a week; and, in the German view, fuel was added to the flames by the attitude of The Times towards the official statement issued in Berlin. The campaign against the paper seems to have been made the screen for a battle between pro- and anti-Colonials in Germany. The Frankfurter Zeitung was more or less accused of high treason for having written that, after all, there was a small grain of truth in The Times report. Lowe, The Tale of a "Times" Correspondent (p. 301), thus sums up the impression created in Germany:

"... I found the German capital in a perfect ferment of fury such as I had never experienced before. ... The Times article gave the deepest offence to the German Government and people, and it is not too much to say that no public utterance from England was ever so bitterly resented in Germany—a result which was all the more deplorable at a time when the two countries had, for the first time for many years, just sunk their respective differences. ... The Times article in question, however, certainly had the effect of interrupting for a time this process of rapprochement, and of otherwise doing an immense deal of harm."

Lowe proceeded to write to Bell (p. 303):

"This incident has only served to deepen the conviction which has always existed in the German mind, that *The Times* is at heart a very anti-German paper, a conviction which (however erroneous) I would have you remember cannot but make itself clearly felt in the attitude of the official world to the agent of the paper here." (September 22, 1890.)

The Times, in due course, was compelled to apologize for its comment, based, the paper admitted, upon misinformation supplied by its Zanzibar Correspondent. The controversy marks the first representation of The Times as a paper of steadily decreasing influence and needing sensations, even at the cost of truth and fairness, because of its desperate financial situation (see National-Zeitung, September 18, Hamburgischer Korrespondent, September 18 and 22, Kreuz-Zeitung, September 20). The diminished importance of The Times became a familiar theme during the next fifteen years, while, inconsistently enough, the Germans also revealed their embarrassment at the international influence of Chirol's and Saunders's messages. The reason for the strong German language over the Zanzibar slave controversy, as for most of the friction between Printing House Square and the Wilhelmstrasse, which was continuous in the period 1890-1900 and most intense between 1900 and 1905, was the same. It is revealed by a correspondent in the National-Zeitung for the morning of September 18, 1890:

We have received, from a highly esteemed source, the following letter about the arrogant language of *The Times*:

"The Times, which is an authority for a large part of the English Press, was never conspicuous for its modesty; now, however, it uses a language towards Germany which not only disregards the politeness generally desirable and not easily dispensed with between friendly nations, but is so impolite as to overstep the limits of objective discussion. At the time of the Anglo-German agreement the paper chose to use a language we had no longer been accustomed to for the past twenty years, and expressed itself on various occasions as that 'We are allowing' Germany to take that or other territory."

## A FOREIGN DEPARTMENT UNDER WALLACE

It was not only the words but the tone of The Times that hurt. The Germans henceforth were not disposed "to accept without protest any haughtiness" from the English; they were determined to be treated as their equals and to see that the German Reich, which had found unity in the task of defeating France, was respected as a World Power not inferior in any permanent sense to Great Britain. In so far as the Reich was less well off in colonies and in ships, time, and German industry it was believed, would strike a fairer balance. In the meantime, German pride would suffer no slights and accept no language from The Times which suggested that Germany was of less account than Britain in the councils of Europe and the world. The attitude of The Times regarding the Franco-Russian negotiations in 1891 was an occasion of friction in diplomatic circles as well as in the German Press. Although the article of August 18 is probably meant rather for French consumption than as a threat against Germany, the reaction in Germany was strong, particularly in the Anglophile Press, which feared an adverse effect on Anglo-German relations. According to Langer (Franco-Russian Alliance, p. 203), The Times tried hard, together with other English papers, to involve Germany in the Straits question and later in the Franco-Siamese conflict; however that may be, its efforts met with no success in the diplomatic field and did not much trouble German public opinion. In the Konia affair (1892) The Times appears as trying to please Germany. This incident, although dealt with at length by Langer (l. c., p. 294), is of small importance and was hardly noticed in the German Press at the time.

Bismarck was aware that Blowitz was on the staff of a journal that prided itself upon its anonymity and aware also that Blowitz could not be expected to impede the circulation of the saying "Il n'y a décidément que deux hommes en Europe, Bismarck et Blowitz." German dislike of Blowitz was largely due to a personal quarrel. Bismarck disliked the correspondent's habit of occupying the centre of the international stage. and the sensational style of his correspondence. The Chancellor writes in the Hamburger Nachrichten, August 19, 1891 (Penzler, Entlass. II, p. 202), that no historical truth but only, so far as Bismarck's personality is concerned, spitefulness is to be expected. Blowitz's article of August 18, 1891, about "England and the Powers," generally and correctly attributed to him, is another occasion of annoyance. In September, 1891, Blowitz's reports about the Schwarzenau interview brought him into full limelight. The German papers suspected that as "Herr Oppert" had not the faintest idea of what had been discussed between the Emperors, he sent out ballons d'essai in order to provoke official statements of the Governments concerned. It was the custom of the German Press at this time to refer to *The Times* Paris Correspondent variously as "Herr Oppert," "Herr Oppert aus Blowitz," "Herr von Blowitz." Bismarck printed as reply to Blowitz which is worth noting. Following some observations in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung, the Chancellor, through the Hamburger Nachrichten, October 27, 1891 (confirmed by Penzler, Fürst Bismarck und die H.N., p. 290), referred to Blowitz's report about the "Crispi-policy, intended to start a fire," "a part absolutely of the notorious stock of Munchausen stories of that Correspondent. It is difficult to foretell what crazy inventions this scandalmonger will yet get into his head." In order to explain the "ill-humour" which, according to the Neue Zürcher Zeitung, "predominates in Herr Blowitz, it may be observed that this state of mind was originally in the main caused by his claims for a decoration." Blowitz had been received by Prince Bismarck in 1878 during the Berlin Congress in compliance with the wish of Disraeli, and, also at his wish, that favour had been accompanied by a decoration which, in relation to Blowitz's standing, was one grade too high. He received the third class. Apparently, Lord Beaconsfield wanted at this time to keep the correspondent in good mood; Blowitz, however, was furious about getting the third class, though an unusually high distinction according to Prussian rules; he asked for the second class and became hostile, says the Zurich paper, when he did not get it.

Mackenzie Wallace is regarded even by Germans as having given them fair play. He is supposed to have been approached by Salisbury in connexion with the Hamburg strike-affair (winter, 1896), but opinion is divided whether it was on Salisbury's suggestion or on his own accord that *The Times* took the line of belittling the matter (see below). Otherwise there are few German criticisms of Wallace as foreign editor. Taken as a whole, *The Times* can hardly be said to have influenced, one way or the other, German official policy during the period 1890-1895; nor did it affect official Anglo-German relations.

The Berlin Press Bureau achieved administrative status in 1894, under Caprivi, who placed Otto Hammann in charge. The papers customarily used were the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung and the Kölnische Zeitung. The activities of the Bureau were extended under Marschall and were considered a disagreeable novelty in informed circles, but they do not appear to have been quite so widespread as Chirol used to claim. Chirol was too proud and sensitive to succeed in Berlin, but that he tried cannot be doubted. He was, in his early days, fond of Holstein, personally, and esteemed him to the end. He believed in Anglo-German friendship. In his time it was the Standard whose attacks upon the Emperor most troubled German diplomacy and even as late as 1897 (in spite of the 1896 campaign), Marschall, Secretary of State, speaking to Lord Curzon, described the Standard as the most anti-German paper. The journal was regarded as the mouthpiece of Lord Salisbury, who certainly used it often.

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The critical attitude towards Chirol began during the Congo dispute of 1894. The German Press of all shades took the opportunity to attack The Times, which, at the beginning, took up with great emphasis the British cause in a matter in which, in German eyes, the wrong was so obviously on the British side, and went so far as tagain in German eves) to threaten Germany for daring to oppose British authority. The difference of opinion between Chirol and Bell was, of course, unknown to the public; and when, at last, Chirol's views prevailed, no credit is given him. The German papers take it as an admission that the attempt of blackmail has misfired. Chirol is presumed to write to order and to have received instructions to prepare the retreat. The explanation that the existence of the Anglo-German convention had been overlooked is received in the German Press with polite sarcasm. Nobody believed it: and it made things worse rather than better. The attitude of the paper in the Shimonoseki conflict (1895), though used by some later historians as proof of its continuous policy of mischief-making, is for the German contemporaries an opportunity for attacking the German Left. Chirol's Egyptian activities lead the local German representative to raise the question whether his aims are compatible with German interests, but the German Foreign Office does not take the matter up and maintains its disinterested policy.

Lowe, Charles: The Tale of a "Times" Correspondent. (London, 1927.)

The correspondent prints, pp. 113ff., letters of appreciation from Chenery and MacDonald and his own letters to both. They reveal, incidentally (e.g., Lowe to MacDonald regarding his visit to Russia in 1883, at pp. 90-3), the rivalry between newspaper correspondents assembled to report the coronation of Alexander III which Lowe, alone, personally witnessed in the Cathedral of the Assumption at Moscow. The correspondent also obtained for The Times the exclusive publication of the General Act of the Berlin Conference, through the assistance, in part, of Sir Travers Twiss, Delane's brother-in-law. His most important political dispatches were the first reports of Germany's Colonial ambitions which became more and more explicit from 1884. He supported the Germans (see below) on the Zanzibar slave-trade allegations. Chapters XXXV—XXXIX record Lowe's controversy with Morell Mackenzie (cf. R. Scott Stevenson, Morell Mackenzie, London, 1946, with many references to Lowe) whose "inspirations," rejected by him, with the support of MacDonald and Buckle, became a source of acute personal controversy later. Lowe, also a true Scot, was also "aye a bonnie fechter".

Penzler, J.: Fürst Bismarck nach seiner Entlassung. (7 vols., Leipzig, 1897 and 1898.)

Fürst Bismarck und die "Hamburger Nachrichten," vol. 1, being vol. 13 of Penzler,

Das Leben des Fürsten Bismarck in Einzeldarstellungen. (Leipzig, 1907.)

Temperley, H. W. V.: "Some additions to the MS Records at Cambridge" in the Cambridge Historical Journal, vol. 1, No. 2, 1923.

Pages 117, 124 for a brief list of the papers of Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace in the Cambridge University Library; p. 336 for a note by H. Temperley that the papers had been examined by himself and W. F. Reddaway. For a list of the classes of papers see pp. 334 ff., infra.

Temperley, H. W. V., and Penson, Lillian: The Foundations of British Foreign Policy (Cambridge, 1939.)

Wallace, D. Mackenzie: Egypt and the Egyptian Question. (London, 1883.)

A reasoned plea (the book is of 521 pp.) for the creation of a military and police force strong enough to ensure public tranquillity, an administrative and judicial system capable of improving the social and economic position of the nomad population and the development of political institutions for the Egyptian people as a whole. Chapter XIII on "British Interests in the Egyptian Question" argues against "any attempt on our part to sneak out of the responsibilities" which we have incurred. "If great perturbations in the Ottoman Empire are really imminent, I would prefer to see them come while Egypt is still under British armed protection." His anti-"Pan-British" argument is developed at pp. 508 ff. Wallace (p. 510) was expressly opposed to annexation or to allowing any other Power greater political influence than our own. It was a standpoint which he maintained throughout his period of control of the Foreign Department.

### Special Press Rates for Telegraphic Transmission

Among the reasons for the relative unimportance of the foreign correspondence at the end of MacDonald's period was the cost. The Times was the most expensive of dailies but mid-Victorian inventiveness, and the strain of the Parnell Commission expense, weakened the paper's capacity to pay the whole cost of correspondence and transmission in the mass required by the paper's bulk. With the establishment of telegraphy as the normal medium for transmitting news, The Times found itself saddled with an unaccustomed charge. The new situation began to be realized after the Franco-Prussian War. Telegraphic news had, of course, been resorted to earlier but the normal medium had always been the letter, and telegraphy was regarded as "extraordinary". In 1871, the "Latest Intelligence" in The Times normally comprised a few short telegrams from

#### TELEGRAPHIC RATES

Paris and the East, together with a number of Reuter's messages, the whole hardly exceeding a column; in 1875, the "Latest Intelligence" had expanded on frequent occasions to more than a page of communications from all parts of the world and Agency telegrams were a small proportion only.

At first this revolution affected all the newspapers. For a decade, fierce competition, especially in the sphere of war correspondence, forced the Press as a whole to spend lavishly. The rivalry became less severe in the 'eighties, chiefly because the excellence of the Agencies diminished the outlay on newspapers' "Own" correspondents and partly because Governments began to impose restrictions upon their activities. Nevertheless, telegraphy could not fail to establish itself as the normal medium and the Press was saddled with a new large and permanent cost of transmission. MacDonald had viewed the situation with some complacency thinking that the financial resources of The Times would be adequate to the cost of the new medium and its competitive use by the penny Press. But the resources of The Times, for the reasons given in Chapter III. declined steeply in the 'eighties. Moreover, the effect of the telegraphic agencies in generally levelling-up the standard in foreign correspondence hit The Times as it hit no other paper. To maintain the supremacy of the foreign news service of The Times was an absolute necessity; and that it should use as little Agency news as possible was an integral part of its practice. The Times at 3d. needed to offer the public more than the penny papers. Even before the Parnell dispute MacDonald took steps to put telegraphic news on a satisfactory basis. In 1874 he first established the private wire system between London and Paris and later extended it to Berlin and Vienna. Thus he organized the European news system with Paris as its centre. The correspondents in Rome wrote and telegraphed to Paris, the Hamburg Correspondent to Berlin, the Constantinople Correspondent to Vienna. About 1875-1876 MacDonald also obtained from the Cable companies a special Press rate. The Manager did not find the companies very forthcoming but it was something to secure from the Indo-European Company the concession of a cheap rate for Sunday transmissions. Calcutta thereupon became an extra-European centre, whither correspondents in Rangoon, the Far East, &c., forwarded their messages for transmission to London. A special rate for Egypt appears not to have been obtained until the late 'eighties—years after political events had forced the newspapers to maintain a regular news service from that country. Before then MacDonald's only remedy was to cut down telegraphy as much as possible; Bell, when he became Manager, used all his energy in the effort to induce the companies to grant special rates. In an endeavour to open an economical Persian service he put before the Indo-European Telegraph Company the argument that "Where there is a Press rate, there we appoint a Correspondent; that Correspondent, for his own sake, is sure to avail himself of it-other papers follow, increased attention is attracted to the place and increased general business is likely to be the result". (October 20, 1890; B.1/380.)

The Manager of The Times was in conflict with the Agencies on other grounds than their charges. The official practice of canalizing their communications with the Press through one or another of the great news agencies was growing. The official desire (in contrast to the early Victorian practice) was to avoid discrimination in favour of any one paper. The practice was followed by the military commanders. They sought relief from the tyranny of such "specials" as William Howard Russell by favouring the Agencies. The Times was not pleased. In 1884 MacDonald instructed Bell that "We cannot be expected to show much confidence in Personages who do not confide in us and if it is supposed that Reuter and the Central News can secure for Egyptian affairs the kind of acceptance at home which The Times commands the delusion may be left to work itself out". (MacDonald to Bell, November 19, 1884; M. 20/676.) But the practice continued. Kitchener discriminated in favour of Reuter and both he and Cromer thought that to do so was to treat all papers alike. Bell protested vigorously and pointed out that Reuter was the chief, almost the only, competitor of The Times. Moreover, as Reuters became indispensable even to The Times, they sought to raise their subscription rates. In 1885 MacDonald "brought all the other Papers except the Standard into combination in resisting his proposals" and won a victory. The Manager considered making use, as a rival agency, of Lloyd's who already supplied the newspapers with shipping intelligence and were not indisposed to use their organization for general news as well. A plan to bring Havas into the English market was also considered. (Memorandum by MacDonald, May 28, and MacDonald to Blowitz, September 10, 1885; M.20/725 and 750.)

As early as 1880 Blowitz had put forward a scheme for supplying Havas with the foreign news of *The Times*. MacDonald rejected the plan because he feared difficulties with the British and French telegraphic authorities, and for another reason. "There is a tenacity of grip about this place—a secretiveness as to news received for publication by *The Times* which would make it almost impossible to get the consent of the Editor and his subordinates to what you propose. In this respect we differ from all other Papers and were I to promise that a particle of our news should be divulged to any one before its regular issue in the broadsheet not a week would pass before I had reason to repent of my rashness." MacDonald, however, entered into certain specific agreements for pooling news. The details do not survive of the arrangement of 1883 which enabled

The Times to reduce its outlay in Chinese news by using the correspondence of the New York Herald. At frequent intervals during the latter part of 1883 The Times published Hong Kong intelligence under the rubric: "The following telegram has been received at the London office of the New York Herald from its special correspondent in China." In 1887 The Times, the Daily News, the Standard and the Daily Telegraph made arrangements jointly to receive the correspondence of H. M. Stanley, presumably on his expedition to "rescue" Emin Pasha. Stanley was the subject of another agreement in November, 1889; this time between the New York Herald, The Times, the Scotsman, the Standard and the Daily News, "for the supply exclusively to these papers of telegrams relating to the meeting of Mr. Stanley and your (the Herald's) correspondent. The conditions were that they were to be published (i) simultaneously (ii) without reference to your own paper (iii) exclusively by above five papers who were to share the cost." This arrangement did not work at all well and Bell afterwards wrote that he thought it had been "entered into with perhaps insufficient consideration on all sides".

It is clear that Bell objected to the terms, not to the principle. He himself was far less conservative than MacDonald was forced to be; and, as will be seen, made some revolutionary proposals as soon as he was established in the office. He also agreed to supply certain organizations with early copies of *The Times*. This privilege had previously been granted and then withdrawn by MacDonald. Now in 1892 the initiative seems to have come from Reuter. Bell informed him on December 21:

We have had an offer to pay £15 a week for the sole privilege of having an early copy by 4 a.m. The price is not sufficient and we have an objection to the principle though I do not say that it would be unsurmountable if the price offered was considerably increased. We should prefer, however, giving an early copy to any respectable person applying for it on conditions to be agreed upon (the chief one being for use abroad only) at a price which we are offered already by one person, viz., £1 per day. Will you let me know whether this would suit you?

The agreement as finally reached was slightly different, at least in the matter of price. Bell no doubt was not seeking to make money out of the transaction, but like Bennett (see below) to frustrate the pirates. Bell thus wrote to Reuter on February 1, 1893:

Referring to our previous correspondence, we have, for the present, made no alteration in the arrangement for the delivery of a very few early copies of *The Times* and there is therefore no reason why you should not have an early copy on the same terms as it is already granted to three other persons at present—these are:

- (1) Ordinary subscription.
- (2) You to provide envelope addressed to some one individual in your office.
- (3) The Paper will be enclosed in that envelope by us and handed to your messenger at about 4 a.m.
- (4) You personally undertake that your messenger shall deliver it intact and unopened to the person to whom it is addressed.
- (5) You personally undertake that that person shall use it solely for telegraphing abroad and that it shall be unseen and unused for any other purpose by anybody whatever before 5 a.m.
  - (6) In telegraphing The Times shall be prominently quoted as the authority.
- (7) Supply of paper before 5 a.m. may be stopped at any moment by order from this office.

Bell endeavoured also to make radical changes of principle. He had been in the office hardly three months when he broached a larger scheme for syndicating the news service of The Times than that MacDonald rejected ten years before. On April 24, 1890, he wrote tentatively to Feeny of the Birmingham Daily Post, one of the provincial correspondents of The Times. Bell had just completed a reorganization of the paper's home news system and the connexions he then established no doubt suggested to him his new plan as now outlined: "Although this letter is on a matter of business I shall be obliged if you will consider it private as it refers to a subject of some importance which has as yet hardly come up for discussion. My idea is that we should put ourselves into more intimate correspondence with a few of the leading Provincial Papers and undertake to supply them with news which we receive both from the neighbourhood of London and from abroad. We should of course have to make special arrangements and incur certain additional expense, but that expense must be already incurred by you in one form or another. At present you have your London Office and presumably a staff solely to supply you with such information as they may be able to pick up direct or from the London Press. Can you give me an idea—confidentially—whether and on what terms it would suit you to receive news direct from us? This is sufficient indication of what is at present a very crude idea in my own mind-if you thought it worth while you might perhaps care to come to town and talk it over. In any case please consider this as strictly

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confidential." It is clear that Bell expected opposition from John Walter and wished to be able to approach him with definite proposals. Objections came, however, from the provincial end. Bell made other proposals later but the result again was failure.

From the first Bell aimed at perfecting the imperial news of *The Times*. MacDonald had been content with a sketchy service from Australia and, within six months of his appointment, Bell was negotiating with the Eastern Extension Cable Company for a daily service from Melbourne. (Bell to the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, September 6, 1890; B.2/107.) The cost led him in September, 1891, to attempt to reduce it by syndication. He circularized papers in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool and elsewhere, proposing collaboration in a daily cable service from Sydney. He estimated the cost at about £950 a year—£550 for an average of 20 words a day for 313 days; £250 for the correspondent's salary; £150 for editing in London and transmission to the provinces. He suggested that *The Times* should pay two-sevenths and the others one-seventh each. The plan, however, was not acceptable and Bell was forced to reject the service altogether.

The only (but there was in 1896 some arrangement by which the American A.P. agency got an early view of Smalley's dispatches) pooling scheme Bell realized in his early years came in special circumstances. The terms were, as Bell wrote, "very generous." The following letter explains the reasons: "We are to receive overnight certain New York Herald telegrams which are to appear in that paper the following day. Of these we are to use all or any or none as we please. They are to be sent to us alone of London papers, and we are to acknowledge the source in all cases. You will kindly pay particular regard to this last condition. Mr. Gordon Bennett's object in making this arrangement is to defeat the agencies which constantly pirate his news without acknowledgment: and it will enable us to forestall all London papers relying on those agencies: that is to say, we shall have overnight news which at present we get through the agencies next day and which the other papers will continue to get next day."

The following document, dated 1897, represents a fundamental change for the better in the telegraphic transmission costs of the newspaper Press as a whole:

Press Telegrams—Conditions on which Press Telegrams will be accepted at reduced Rates.

- 1. The lines of the Eastern Telegraph Company from London or Marseilles to Egypt, Perim, Obock, Aden and India; the lines of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company to Penang, Singapore, Cochin China, China, Tonquin, Manila, Java and Australia; and the East Coast Cables of the Eastern and South African Telegraph Company from Aden to South Africa, are available to the Press for the transmission of news or intelligence for publication in newspapers which are allowed by the Governments or Companies to receive intelligence by telegraph at reduced rates.
- 2. Such messages shall not interfere with the transmission of the ordinary message traffic, and in order to ensure this, the transmission of such news messages may be deferred, suspended, or interrupted, until any Government message, or any ordinary or Press messages at full rates, that may be on hand, shall have been transmitted and completed.
- 3. The working of the lines shall be subject to the rules and regulations of the International Telegraph Convention.
- 4. No messages at the reduced rates shall be sent except for publication in such newspapers, and they must be written in plain English when addressed to British stations, and in plain French when addressed to French stations, so as to be intelligible to the transmitting offices. Messages containing news or information not for publication, or containing code words, or words of concealed meaning, or groups of figures (unless when used in their natural sense) or ciphers, shall be paid for at the full tariff rates in force for ordinary messages.
- 5. The newspapers, their correspondents, or agents are required to address their messages to a newspaper office which shall be prohibited from selling, distributing or communicating such messages to Clubs, Exchanges, or Newsrooms, or disposing of them for any purpose whatsoever directly or indirectly other than for publication in newspapers allowed by the Governments or Companies to receive them.
- 6. Messages can only be accepted from the authorized correspondent of a newspaper, and the news sent in such messages must be duly published in the newspapers, or satisfactory reasons be given for non-publication in the absence of which full rates will be charged.
- 7. The administrations reserve to themselves the right to terminate the present arrangements, but will, in such case, announce their intentions twelve months beforehand.

# VII. IMPERIALISM: THE TRANSVAAL 1889-1895

Manuscript

Rhodes House Papers.

Diary kept by Mrs. C. F. Moberly Bell for 1895-1897 (lent by Miss Enid Moberly Bell).

P.H.S. Papers: C. F. Moberly Bell's Letter-books containing correspondence with Younghusband, Powell (The Times Capetown Correspondent), H. Cuffe (Director of Public Prosecutions, 1896), British South Africa Company, &c., and original drafts of Shaw-Rhodes cables, Nos. 73, 106 and 164. (P.H.S. archives.) The correspondence with Madame Couvreur, The Times Brussels Correspondent, is at M.B. 13/268. She was Jessie Charlotte Huybers, daughter of a Belgian father and English mother living in Hobart Town, where she married a Tasmanian and settled in Australia. Later she became well known throughout Europe as a public speaker on social and labour questions and a writer under the name of "Tasma". She married, as her second husband, M. Auguste Couvreur, a prominent Belgian statesman, and when he died in 1894, succeeded him as The Times correspondent in Brussels. Mme. Couvreur died in October, 1897.

## Printed

Bell, E. H. C. Moberly: Life and Letters of C. F. Moberly Bell. (London, 1927.)

Blunt, Wilfrid Scawen: My Diaries. (London, 1932.)

Blunt writes under date April 25, 1896: "[George Wyndham] has been seeing much of Jameson, whom he likes, and of the gang that have been running the Transvaal business, about a dozen of them, with Buckle, *The Times* editor, and Miss Flora Shaw who, he told me confidentially, is really the prime mover in the whole thing, and who takes the lead in all their private meetings, a very clever middle-aged woman." (Chapter XI, p. 226.)

Colvin, Ian: Life of Jameson. (London, 1922.)

Fitzpatrick, Sir J. P.: The Transvaal from Within. (London, 1899.)

Garrett, Edmund and Edwards, E. J.: The Story of an African Crisis. (London, 1897.)
Garrett was editor of the Cape Times and Edwards was assistant editor.

Garvin, J. L.: Life of Joseph Chamberlain. (London, 1934.)

Garvin records (III, pp. 82-3) several conversations with Flora Shaw, including her vivid description of Chamberlain's impact on the Colonial Office on his appointment as Colonial Secretary in 1895. Flora Shaw told Garvin that she asked Chamberlain point-blank whether he knew in advance of Jameson's intentions, and received his denial, before she gave her own evidence to the Select Committee. She assured Garvin that, for her part, she had never mentioned the matter of Jameson's preparations to Chamberlain, or divulged to him any information she received from Harris before the Raid took place.

Hammond John Hays: Autobiography. (New York, [1935].)

Hole, Col. Hugh Marshall: The Jameson Raid. (London, 1930.)

Kruger, Paul: The Memoirs of Paul Kruger. (2 vols., London, 1902.)

Report of the Select Committee of the Cape of Good Hope House of Assembly on the Jameson Raid into the territory of the South African Republic, presented to Parliament by Command of Her Majesty, March 1897.

This Blue Book, commonly known as the "Cape Report," includes intercepted code telegrams with cipher, private letters, sketch maps and other material reprinted from the South African Republic Green Book, No. 2, issued by Kruger's Government after the prosecution in Pretoria of the Reform Committee, 1896.

Saturday Review. (London, Weekly.)

Many references to *The Times* occur in the file for the period February-August, 1896. The *Saturday Review* was edited between 1895 and 1898 by James Thomas Harris, or as he preferred to be known, "Frank Harris." He was born in Galway of pure Welsh blood. His father, Thomas Vernon Harris, was in the Naval Service James Harris went to the U.S. at the age of 14 and after entering Kansas University as James F. Harris emerged as "Frank," returned to Europe and roamed the Continent. Later he came to London and edited, first, *The Evening News* in its old Conservative days, and, secondly, the *Fortnightly Review*. After eight years with the *Fortnightly*, Harris purchased the *Saturday Review*, collecting round him a brilliant team which included W. B. Harris, who was, of course, no relation. At this time he made the acquaintance of Arthur Walter, in whose house he was for

a period after 1890 a frequent guest. He repaid his host's hospitality by numerous attacks on *The Times*. In 1896 Harris went to South Africa as a pro-Boer and he saw Kruger, Hofmeyer and Rhodes. The *Saturday Review* of this period contains many criticisms of Bell, Buckle and Flora Shaw. On September 11, 1897, the *Review* published the article headed "Delenda est Germania," which was used for the purposes of German naval propaganda.

Second Report from the Select Committee on British South Africa; together with the Proceedings of the Committee and Minutes of Evidence, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, July 13, 1897.

The Select Committee was appointed "to inquire into the origin and circumstances of the incursion into the South African Republic by an armed force, and into the administration of the British South Africa Company, and to report thereon, and further to report what alterations are desirable in the government of the territories under the control of the Company". The Report covers the origin and circumstances of the Jameson Raid only, the Committee not having had time to deal with the other two items on the agenda.

[Shaw, Flora]: Letters from South Africa by The Times Special Correspondent, reprinted from The Times of July, August, September and October, 1892. (London, 1893.)

Flora Shaw described visits made in 1892 to the diamond mines of Kimberley and the gold mines of Johannesburg. She interviewed Kruger in Pretoria and sympathised with his grievances. At this time she was not impressed by her fellow-countrymen's revolutionary zeal, for she writes (p. 45): "At present the English Transvaal concerns itself very little with politics. It is too busy with the work it has undertaken. Time enough when theories of government affect the business of development to have opinions about them." Cecil Rhodes wrote to Bell on January 6, 1893, that "the letters of your correspondent faithfully represent the situation in South Africa as it exists at present". (P.H.S. Archives.)

[Shaw, Flora]: "Cecil J. Rhodes 1853-1902" by F[lora] L. L[ugard] in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th Edition, 1911.

Stead, W. T.: Joseph Chamberlain: Conspirator or Statesman? An Examination of the Evidence as to his Complicity in the Jameson Conspiracy, together with the newly published letters of the Hawksley Dossier. ("Review of Reviews" Office, London.) [1900.]

Stead pays tribute to Flora Shaw's intelligence and competence, pointing out that she received her early training in journalism under his direction at the Pall Mall Gazette office. (p. 64.) He is convinced that Chamberlain was privy to the conspiracy and that Flora Shaw was an intermediary between the Colonial Secretary and Rhodes. He remarks: "She was also in charge of the Colonial Department of The Times newspaper, and was hand-and-glove with Mr. Moberly Bell, the manager-editor as he may be called, in distinction to Mr. Buckle, who was only editor-editor." (p. 65.) Stead includes a collection of letters, first published on January 5, 1900, in the Indépendance Belge of Brussels, and supposed to be the "missing telegrams" that Hawksley refused to produce for the Select Committee. Mr. Garvin (v. Life of Joseph Chamberlain, III, page 111) considers these letters are wholly irrelevant to the question of Chamberlain's supposed guilty knowledge of the Jameson Raid.

Williams, Basil: Cecil Rhodes. (New edition, London, 1938.)

Younghusband, Captain Francis: South Africa of To-day. (London, 1898.)

# X. HOSTILE EUROPE

Anderson, P. R.: The Background of Anti-English Feeling in Germany. (Washington, 1939.)

Miss Anderson's documentation of the growth of Pan-Germanism includes copious references to the Press and remarks the justice of the comments of the

Berlin Correspondent of The Times.

Chirol, so far from being anti-German, long held the view that Russian policy in the Far East left Britain with no alternative but to maintain good relations with Germany. On January 1, 1896, Chirol prophesied that "The crisis in the Transvaal is clearly endangering our relations with Germany". His judgment was considered as correct, in Germany, says Miss Anderson at p. 239, and quotes the Kreuz-Zeitung of January 10 in support. It must be acknowledged, however, that German interest in Africa would inevitably under the Neue Kurs keep pace with that of Britain and France.

The Times, it may be admitted, sometimes exaggerated, e.g., Chirol's dispatch at the end of February, 1896, that German influence was behind the Sultan's demand for British evacuation of Egypt. Upon this, the Vossische Zeitung (February 27, 1896)

hinted that Chirol's message was ordered from London, and feels bound to warn Britain against the machinations of *The Times*. They could result only in diverting the attention of the English public from their real enemies, as Germany has not the slightest interests in Egypt. The *Kreuz-Zeitung* (March 4) takes the opportunity once more to point to Chirol's hostile attitude, and thinks it hardly worth while to contradict the report as *The Times* itself seems not to believe in it. The *Hamburgischer Korrespondent* (February 29) is more indignant. Hatzfeldt took the matter philosophically. "If (he writes to Hohenlohe on February 22, 1896, *G.P.* XI, p. 137) the report of *The Times*, to which I would not attribute any importance, has been inspired at all, it might as well be intended to frighten Austria and Italy and deter them from coming to terms with Russia, as to initiate an Anglo-French rapprochement by sacrificing Egypt." The German Foreign Office took a more serious view, and Marschall wrote to Saurma, the Ambassador at Constantinople, on March 3. 1896 (*G.P.* XI, p. 146) that:

"The English and Russian papers are trying to connect H.M. Government with the recent revival of the Egyptian question. . . . You are authorized to make it absolutely clear to your colleagues and to the Press, that we have and shall have nothing to do with the revival of the problem."

Beazley, R. C.: The Road to Ruin in Europe. (London, 1932.)

Includes a useful personal account of the change of atmosphere produced in Britain by the publication of the Kaiser's telegram to Kruger.

Grüning, Irene: Die russische öffentliche Meinung und ihre Stellung zu den Grossmächten, 1878-1894. (Berlin, 1929.)

Hoffmann, R. J. S.: Great Britain and the German Trade Rivalry, 1875-1914. (Philadelphia, 1933.)

There is no evidence that the London anti-German Press was the voice of British economic interests that stood to gain by Germany's ruin, although it is true that the organs most hostile to Germany, such as the Daily Mail, Times, National Review, Fortnightly Review, played up the German trade peril more conspicuously than did the mercantilist Manchester Guardian and other Liberal journals. (See W. Primke, p. 821, infra.)

Langer, W. L.: European Alliances and Alignments. (New York, 1931.)

Invaluable for the period (1871-1890) Langer's book is of value, incidentally, for the chapter on the Triple Alliance, the documentation of which includes, numerous references to *The Times* correspondence from Rome.

Langer, W. L.: The Franco-Russian Alliance, 1890-1894. (Cambridge, Mass., 1929.)

The deliberate passivity of *The Times* towards the Franco-Russian *entente* at Kronstadt in 1891 is well described at pp. 194 ff.; also the reserved attitude towards the upshot of the Toulon meeting at pp. 356 ff. There are abundant references to mention by *The Times* of French hostility towards Britain and British policy, principally in Egypt and Central Africa. Germany's possession and control of the balance of power after the Franco-Russian Alliance, and the friction with Britain which resulted from her efforts to maintain it are described in the final chapter.

Langer, W. L.: The Diplomacy of Imperialism. (2 vols., New York, 1935.)

Professor Langer says (I, 243 ff.) that the British reaction to the Kruger telegram will always remain something of a mystery, since it was much less offensive than the Cleveland message. The pent-up feelings of the people needed an outlet, and the indignation over the fact that Germany could no longer be counted upon as a blind follower in the case of a conflict with France and Russia made the English turn against the country which, with a small fleet, seemed the least able to take up the challenge; apart from that, he holds commercial rivalry responsible in considerable measure. "Trade jealousy," also, is a motive which is adduced here and there in the German Press as a cause of English hostility. In 1897, Hatzfeldt reported to Hohenlohe (December 18, 1897, G.P. XII, p. 45) that Salisbury had told him that "British public opinion was yet little favourably disposed towards ourselves, in the main, probably, because of the commercial rivalry of Germany which was of great disadvantage to British trade". But it would be difficult to find in *The Times* support for the view that commercial jealousy lay at the root of its suspicions of German policy. (See Hoffmann above.) The files of the paper show rather that the causes of conflict are to be found in the impossibility of reconciling the colonial policy of Germany as developed by the Wilhelmian Germany, and that of Britain as developed by Liberal Imperialism. South Africa and the Kaiser's telegram supplied all the elements of a major clash. The Cleveland message (for which see Vol. IV of this work) was not accompanied by a threat to intervene in Africa or

The factors for an anti-English policy had long existed in Germany. The reactionary upper class, as Chirol when O.O.C. often pointed out, hated England as the chief exemplar

### HOSTILE EUROPE

of monarchical and constitutional Liberalism. They joined with the industrial, commercial, professional and academic middle class whose instinctive jealousy of Britain was quickened by trade competition. Added to these factors was the determination, based on the consciousness of the victory and national unity achieved in 1870, to be treated as the equal of Britain. All these circles urged that the Anglo-German agreement of 1890 over Zanzibar was a sacrifice of German interests to the undesirable and impossible ideal of an understanding with Britain. The popular sentiment, reported Chirol in 1894, was such that it was easier to swim with the anti-English current than against it. The Kaiser's telegram brought all this widespread, but not hitherto articulate, dislike to the surface. Whereas at the beginning of the year, the National-Zeitung (January 4, 1896) and Kreuz-Zeitung (January 5) admit that Chirol's reports give a fair account of the feeling in Germany, on January 6, the National-Zeitung laments that Chirol had betaken himself to the side of the Jingoes, and regrets that his distortions and misstatements must mislead the English public about the real state of opinion in Germany. On January 7 the paper writes that the outbursts of The Times and of the majority of the British Press have had the effect of provoking riots against harmless German residents in England. It is to be noted that of all the English papers which at the time were criticizing Germany and the Emperor, it is The Times which is being singled out for the counter-attack. The Vossische Zeitung (January 9) did not believe that the hostility towards Germany, then to be found in England, was a transitory phenomenon caused by the Kruger telegram, but had deeper reasons. The traditional pro-English attitude of the Vossische Zeitung underwent a complete change in 1896. Chirol's opinion was well expressed in his telegram of January 6, 1896:

"The German Press, which has little real influence on the conduct of public affairs in this country, and which is sometimes the exponent and sometimes the critic of the policy of its Government, but seldom has any share in guiding and informing it, is apt to apply the same standard to the Press of other countries more fortunately situated. It is fain to deride, as a mere outburst of impotent wrath, the resolute and apparently unanimous language of the English Press. But it may well be doubted whether in more responsible quarters the uncompromising language of the leading English newspapers, and especially of *The Times*, which has been for so many years the warm and consistent advocate of a close understanding between England and Germany, will have been dismissed with the same lightheartedness." (*The Times*, January 7, 1896.)

Hints in The Times of a rapprochement with France and Russia added fuel to the flames, and the Hamburgischer Korrespondent (January 12. 1896) counter-attacked with hints at an anti-English Continental League, while the National-Zeitung (January 13) notes with satisfaction the chilly response of the St. Petersburger Zeitung. In the later half of the month, Chirol is singled out for attack (cf. National-Zeitung, January 18 and 22, Vossische Zeitung, February 4). Hamburgischer Korrespondent. (January 21) mentions the letter of a "Foreigner" (The Times, January 18) as evidence that people in England have not yet realized that Great Britain has gone too far and that Germany is no longer a "quantité négligeable." National-Zeitung, January 28, regrets that Chamberlain's speech has given fresh courage to The Times which had already become somewhat subdued; with indignation and irony the journal pointed out that in the eyes of The Times the German Press is without the slightest importance one day and a well-drilled instrument of the German Government the other. The point should be noted, since the identical allegation was made continually against Saunders. What Chirol meant was that as German policy was equivocal, professions of friendship in the official Press were meaningless. The correspondent's criticism of the German Press was naturally felt by the German editors as a criticism of themselves by a resident foreigner and was resented as such. German journalists insisted that The Times was violently anti-German, and wished to create distrust and hatred, and was working towards an Anglo-German clash. The paper was persistently described as the organ and mouth-piece of the big mineowners and City swindlers. It is only a step to the inference already being drawn occasionally, and later elevated by repetition to the level of a truism, that British Germanophobia was nothing but trade jealousy and fear of the superior qualities of the German merchant and the German manufacturer. Equally it became a commonplace that Germany, Government, Press, and people were simple, innocent and humble ensuers of peace. The leading English paper was a highly disturbing factor.

The Vossische Zeitung (March 31, 1896) calls The Times the leader of the gang of the anti-Transvaal and anti-German agitators; but, it is said, the paper cannot be taken seriously any longer, and that its warmongery is certainly not approved by the British Government. The Times was reminded of the services that Germany had lately rendered Britain in Egypt. There is an implication that Germany might change her attitude should Britain wish to strain the relations further. On April 15, 1896, Schiemann complained in the Kreuz-Zeitung of the persistent anti-Germanism of the English Press, and in particular of certain "insulting" remarks of The Times against the Emperor, which make it impossible for the German Press to liquidate the incident. On April 18 the National-Zeitung speaks of the growing disgust of the civilized world at the warmongering of the Chartered Company and the papers at their service, such

as The Times, and the motive of trade jealousy is particularly mentioned in connexion with the paper. On April 21 the same paper, by quoting its British and foreign sources, gives Chirol the lie direct with regard to his allegation that the German journal had reported about South Africa against better knowledge. The Vossische Zeitung of April 24 calls the reports of The Times from Delagoa Bay a perfidy; they were aimed at creating the impression that German troops were being sent to Transvaal. The Hamburgischer Korrespondent of April 18 is annoyed with Chirol's reports, and there is plenty of the same sort of comment in the German Press during the remainder of 1896.

In the interval between the departure of Chirol and the appointment of Saunders, when Steed occupied the position, the leading articles of *The Times* were disliked. In November, 1896, the Emperor talked to members of the Berlin Embassy with the aim of making the British Government take steps to end the attacks of the British Press. At first Salisbury refused; the British Government, he said, had no means to influence the newspapers. Next month when the *Hamburger Nachrichten* alleged that the dockers' strike in the port of Hamburg had been organized by *British* shipping circles with the connivance of British workers' organizations, the Emperor, afraid that the statement would lead German nationalist papers to extremes, had another talk with Lascelles. His report about it is somewhat confused, but it seems that he suggested an official British denial. Salisbury wired to Lascelles on December 3, 1896 (G.P. XIII, No. 3402, enclos., p. 11) that:

Since the Emperor seems to attach great weight to our influencing the attitude of the Press on this point, I will communicate with Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace who is on the staff of *The Times* and with whom I have a slight personal acquaintance. But please impress on His Majesty that we are absolutely without the means of influencing or controlling the Press, and I cannot be sure as to the effect which may be produced by my appeal to Wallace. The only course for *The Times* to take in dealing with the matter would be to censure Prince Bismarck. Could this be con-

sidered objectionable?

Hohenlohe, in his letter transmitting a copy of the above telegram to the Emperor (December 8, 1896, G.P. XIII, p. 10) writes that:

Meanwhile, there is already . . . in *The Times* of the 5th inst. . . . the article ridiculing, as a Friedrichsruhe invention, the allegation made by some German papers that English merchants are responsible for the Hamburg strike, and representing it as lacking even the slightest bit of proof. The fact that this was circulated over the wire by Reuter, corroborates my impression that Lord Salisbury thinks he has hereby fulfilled his promise contained in the telegram to Sir Frank Lascelles, and that therefore nothing more is to be expected on his part in this matter.

The tone of the letter shows that Hohenlohe was not too pleased with the intervention of the Emperor regarding a matter on which he seems to have been but very vaguely informed. There is no evidence whether the article of December 5 was caused by Salisbury's intervention. The relations between the two countries certainly deteriorated in 1896 but the cause lay rather in the Kruger telegram and the policy which it symbolized than in the "attacks" of the Press. In view of the statements of historians (see below for Fay, Hale, et al.) that among the causes of the war of 1914-1918 was The Times, and principally the correspondence printed from its Berlin Correspondent, George Saunders, it should be emphasized that the device of throwing all the blame for the deterioration of Anglo-German relations upon the English Press was resorted to as early as January, 1896. On the 28th Bismarck may be found writing in the Hamburger Nachrichten (cf. Penzler VII, p. 19) as follows:

Anglo-German relations were till now not exactly intimate, but nevertheless not bad. But there is no doubt that, in fact, the insolent and offending outburst of the English Press, on the occasion of the expression of a personal opinion [i.e., the Kruger telegram] by the German Emperor, has changed the situation. Every country is responsible for the language of its Press. It may be that the importance of the English Press is, in that respect, over-estimated on the Continent, &c. . . .

As an individual, we like the Englishman. English policy never has been well disposed toward ourselves, and the English Press earlier treated Germany with disdain just as it is now showing hostility and jealousy. . . . We only want to stress the fact that the English Press, by its wild outbursts, although they only appeared in printer's ink on paper, has done harm to the good relations between two nations.

The truth is that *The Times* was not anti-German, it was merely insular and at the same time Imperialist. It is matter for surprise that the diligence of the German doctorandi which is marked in the historical bibliography of the later years passes by the year 1896. Contemporary newspaper-writers apart, printed comment on the role played by *The Times* in Anglo-German relations during the year 1896 is curiously meagre, which is the more surprising since Germans are fond of saying that *The Times*, which had been unfriendly to Germany for thirty years, turned to open and calculated enmity in this year. One reason may be that the official documents themselves make small mention of *The Times* during the year, and none at all as far as the main issue, the South African war, is concerned. Historians, accustomed to rely upon State papers and

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diplomatic documents as primary and almost self-sufficient sources, tend to use them as the sole basis of the retrospective interpretation of policy. They value the Press only as so much background material for the use of State papers. But, as the reader of the history of The Times had the opportunity of observing, the Press itself is a document, not infrequently of diplomatic standing in the historians' own sense. It is used by foreign secretariats as a channel of communication recognizably, and is to that extent "official" though often disclaimable and to that extent "unofficial". The regular and systematic publication of material supplied by foreign secretaries, whether or not acknowledged by some typographical prefix or "signature," undoubtedly has its convenience to statesmen though it does not necessarily raise the dignity of the journal in question. The first volume of the History of The Times is largely a statement of the means by which the paper emancipated itself from official and party control. The German Press, metropolitan and provincial, remained an eighteenth-century product. It was saturated with "influence" of one sort or another. In Wilhelmian Germany officially inspired paragraphs often made their first appearance even in provincial papers, the Kölnische Zeitung being the most conspicuous instance. One consequence is that the German historians, wont as they are at home to attribute importance to official sources, sometimes fail when they deal with the relations between British opinion and British policy. The lack of respect given at home to German public opinion naturally obstructs the adequate use of the London Press by German historians as a key to the attitude of The Times, and commentators in newspapers concentrate upon British criticism of Germany without perceiving its roots in insularity and sentiment. At this period British public opinion was being shocked by a scandal attended by political and military consequences in France of a far-reaching order and by prejudice to Anglo-French relations, which had also suffered as the result of the Boer crisis.

## The Dreyfus Case

The essential facts are that Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a probationary staff officer belonging to the 14th Regiment of Artillery, was secretly arrested on October 15, 1894, for having communicated confidential documents to a Foreign Power; that General Mercier was Minister of War; Gen. de Boisdeffre, Chief of Staff; and General Gonse, Assistant Chief, while Colonel Sandherr, of known anti-semitic views, was director of the Intelligence Department, and that under him were Commandants Picquart and Henry. Commandant Du Paty de Clam was an officer attached to the General Staff and Commandant Esterhazy was serving with his regiment. Dreyfus, forbidden to communicate with his lawyer, was interrogated daily by Du Paty de Clam. It was some time before he was informed of the basis of the charges against him—a document known as the bordereau, i.e., a sheet of thin paper, without date, address or signature. It enumerated five military documents which the writer was forwarding, and concluded: "Je vais partir en manoeuvres." The bordereau had been stolen in September from the office of Colonel von Schwartzkoppen, German Military Attaché in Paris, and offered to the Ministry of War by an agent formerly employed by the Intelligence Branch. Sandherr thought it had come from the usual source—von Schwartzkoppen's wastepaper basket—but it now seems certain that it had been stolen before the German Military Attaché had the opportunity of reading it.

Sandherr reported the discovery to his superiors at the Ministry of War, who treated it very seriously for several reasons. They had evidence that espionage was still being conducted from the German Embassy, although not necessarily within the knowledge of the Ambassador, Count Münster. The position of General Mercier was far from secure at the time. A recent Press campaign had accused him of gross inefficiency and to discover and convict a traitor would be a sure way to restore the reputation of his Ministry. Three of the five items in the bordereau referred to the artillery. A search was therefore made for an artillery officer having access to confidential information. The choice fell upon Dreyfus, for reasons which are still rather obscure. There was an undoubted resemblance between his handwriting and that of the bordereau, he was a Jew and hence suspect in high military-clerical circles; in addition a cold, reserved temperament made him unpopular. There was no evidence whatever to connect him with the bordereau, and as he protested his innocence the charge turned on the similarity of handwriting. The paper was examined by five experts; three said it was written by Dreyfus and two that it was not. The agents sent out by Du Paty to collect moral evidence against Dreyfus discovered only that he was a keen and efficient officer with good prospects, leading an honourable private life, and belonging to a wealthy and highly loyal family from Alsace. Major Forzinetti, the prison governor, became convinced that the wrong man had been arrested. A capable lawyer, Maître Demange, undertook the prisoner's defence.

Meanwhile, the Press took it for granted that Germany was the country to which the secrets had been sold, and dressed up the crime as part of a gigantic Jewish assault on the national security of France. Mercier did not doubt that the traitor had been found but feared that the evidence was too slight to condemn him. The German Ambassador, resenting the attitude of the Press, declared that no person at the Embassy had been in communication, directly or indirectly, with Dreyfus. Mercier, in consequence,

was able to persuade the Cabinet to agree to a secret trial. Hanotaux, the Foreign Minister, was told that publicity would so compromise Germany that a dangerous international situation might result. The Court-martial opened in strict secrecy on December 19, 1894. Picquart, the Government observer, reported to Mercier that a conviction was doubtful. Next day Henry swore on oath that he had been warned twice that year that Dreyfus was a traitor. But the handwriting experts were still divided; there was no motive for the crime. When the seven judges adjourned, their verdict was still uncertain.

Then occurred the great irregularity of the trial. Colonel Maurel, President of the Court, opened an envelope which Du Paty, with Mercier's approval, had instructed him was too dangerous to be examined in the Court room. This secret dossier consisted mainly of notes stolen from Schwartzkoppen, none of which mentioned Dreyfus by name, and a note to Schwartzkoppen from Panizzardi the Italian Military Attaché in Paris. This letter, actually written in 1892 or 1893, referred to plans handed over by "Ce (sic) canaille de D." (who was later identified as a spy named Dubois). The seven officer-judges, now convinced, raised no protest against the illegality of this concealed evidence. Their verdict of guilty was unanimous, and Dreyfus was sentenced to transportation, perpetual imprisonment in a fortress and military degradation. Upon this, The Times correspondent wrote from Paris:

No doubt can now exist as to the guilt of Captain Dreyfus, and some of the newspapers are indignant that he was not condemned to death... This is the result of the secrecy of the trial. People are ignorant of the precise gravity of the crime; they do not know whether the results are irreparable.

Blowitz, though strongly deploring the "barbarism" of a secret trial, could see no motive for the crime, but concluded that "It is impossible to question the unanimous verdict of seven honourable men". The leading article on December 24, 1894, was not concerned with the justice of the sentence on Dreyfus, but expressed astonishment

at the positive manner in which not only the populace, but the Press, of Paris appear to have taken for granted the criminality of the accused. We are told that public opinion and the newspapers unanimously approved the finding of the Court-martial. But as we have said, the trial was conducted with closed doors and the Parisian public cannot therefore have founded their approval on any knowledge whatever of the facts upon which the conviction was based.

The article noted that although the names of the witnesses for prosecution and defence had been published, no persons had been cited from the German or other Embassies, although Dreyfus was popularly supposed to have sold secret documents to the German Embassy. The article thus proceeded:

The objectionable part of the procedure on the trial of Captain Dreyfus was not the suppression of the contents of the papers alleged to have been stolen, but the conviction of the prisoner without the proof, in open Court and on sworn testimony, of his having stolen them. . . . It is to be feared also that the Anti-Semitic propaganda in France increased the hostility to Captain Dreyfus. . . . It may be important for the French people to preserve the secrets of their War Department, but it is of infinitely greater importance for them to guard their public justice against even the suspicion of unfairness or of subjection to the gusts of popular passion.

The same day the German Embassy published a further disclaimer of relations with Dreyfus. Foreign journalists were excluded from the degradation ceremony on January 5, 1895. Blowitz wrote that it was so barbarous an affair that it was unfortunate that the death penalty could not be pronounced. There were rumours that Dreyfus had confessed his guilt. French newspapers were filled with savage denunciations of the traitor, but *The Times* gave no more space to the matter. Dreyfus sailed for Devil's Island on February 21, 1895.

In 1895, when the Intelligence Department of the French War Office was reorganized and Picquart succeeded Sandherr as director, he looked into the dossiers and discovered that the deportation of Dreyfus had not stopped the leakage of confidential information to Germany. His inquiries were secretly hampered by his subordinate Henry, who unremittingly bribed witnesses and forged documents that would appear to make the case against Dreyfus water-tight. The General Staff, satisfied as they were with the course of events, were only too pleased to accept Henry's evidence asconclusive. Picquart found himself entrusted with a vague but "urgent" mission to North Africa. However, facts leaked out. On November 10, 1896, Le Matin published the first reproduction of the bordereau. The handwriting was recognized as Esterhazy's. He became an object of public suspicion, but was protected by the General Staff, and was begged to stay in the country since his fligot would look like an admission of guilt. The daily production over a long period of new accusations and cross-accusations, manifestos and heated disclaimers in the Press fanned the "affaire Dreyfus" into a national controversy.

The Times noticed the agitation in a leading article on November 27, 1897, which accused the French of losing their heads over the affair. The paper considered that the

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whole trouble arose from the fact that the trial was secret. In England Dreyfus would have had a public trial, and fresh evidence discovered later on would have come quietly before the Home Secretary. The journal did not then doubt Dreyfus's guilt or the good faith of his judges, but advised a public re-trial:

The honour of the members of the Court-martial forbids, it is said, such a course. This is nonsense, pure and simple. The honour of the Court requires it to be proved that the members did in secrecy that which they can justify in public, and it requires that justice should emerge from the atmosphere of anonymous letters and personal calumnies in which the controversy now moves.

French agitation procured in January, 1898, that Esterhazy should appear before a Court-martial on a charge of treason. Most of the evidence, including Picquart's, was taken in secret; and his acquittal was a foregone conclusion. Blowitz, the Paris Correspondent of *The Times*, explained why Esterhazy was so extravagantly cheered by his fellow officers in the Court and by the crowd outside. He thought the demonstrations were directed not towards Esterhazy personally, but against those who accused him. But the Dreyfusard party included many Protestants who, with the Jews, were pointed to as conspiring against the rest of France. The leading article did not find this theory convincing. It seemed credible that Dreyfus might be the victim of a plot engineered by private malice:

The method by which Captain Dreyfus was condemned would certainly have condemned Major Esterhazy as well had it been impartially applied. It only needed this second trial to complete the proof that individual liberty in France is threatened not so much by defects in the system of jurisprudence as by the use under the forms of law of an arbitrary Power differing in no way from the lettres de cachet of prerevolutionary days or from the openly avowed tyranny of undisguised autocracy. . . . It is mere debauchery of the public conscience to invoke in defence of a judgment so arrived at all the sentiments of respectable justice to which it offers a cynical defiance. . . . (The Times, January 13, 1898.)

On the same January 13, Zola issued his flaming challenge—J'Accuse—addressed to the President of the Republic. P.H.S. gave it a tepid reception:

The accuser is a man who has gained for himself a very prominent place in French literature as a writer of fiction of a peculiar kind, but he has not hitherto shown, so far as we are aware, any very special care for public justice, or any special interest in the fate of the oppressed.

His "unnecessary and injudicious violence" was disliked, and it was hinted that, as an author, he might not be averse from the publicity involved. Zola was tried in February, 1898, on a charge limited to that of defamation of the Court-martial. The Dreyfus case was to be treated as a chose jugée. Zola's trial took place in an atmosphere of violent unrest and agitation. There were daily demonstrations against the Jews, fighting occurred outside the Palais de Justice and open rioting and massacre broke out in Algeria. Zola received the maximum sentence—a year's imprisonment and a fine of 3,000 francs. The Times, now sympathetic towards Zola, viewed the case as a further example of the deplorable condition of the judiciary in France. The verdict had been obtained by military pressure, and the descendants of Boulanger had won hands down. Zola's sentence was quashed on technical grounds, but further charges were brought against him in July and the sentence was reimposed. He was advised by his lawyer to withdraw from France for the time being and reluctantly fied to England.

The triumph of the anti-Dreyfusards was short, for on July 7, 1898, M. Cavaignac, Minister of War, made public certain documents upon which he said the Government based their belief in Dreyfus's guilt. It was noticed that the bordereau and the letter referring to "Ce canaille de D." were not among them. On August 31 came the news that Henry, acting head of the Intelligence Department, had confessed that these very documents were forged and had committed suicide. General de Boisdeffre, Chief of Staff, immediately resigned. The Times remarked that his resignation was "no loss to the French army, since no man has done so much to lead the French people to believe that justice is one thing and the interests of the higher officers another". Esterhazy was cashiered and fled abroad, Cavaignac resigned. When another request for revision was refused, rioting in the Paris streets recalled the worst moments of the Boulangist agitation. The Government was defeated on October 25, and at last, on October 29, 1898, the Cour de Cassation declared the request for revision admissible. Two days later Charles Dupuy formed a new Cabinet.

In The Times no fewer than seven and a half columns were devoted on October 13, 1898, to a letter from Sir Godfrey Lushington, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Home Affairs, giving an impartial account of the whole case, so far as was then known. The facts appeared to exonerate Dreyfus and inculpate his accusers. The next day the paper gave six columns to an account "compiled from French sources" but generally agreeing with Lushington's. The leading article of October 13 openly termed Dreyfus's condemnation "not only an illegality but an iniquity." Dupuy's new Government

received only cautious approval. The Dreyfus affair had grown to the proportions of a grave international menace. The paper noted the growing coolness of France towards the Russian alliance:

The French are not happy at home, therefore nothing looks right to them abroad. It is a misfortune not only for themselves but for others, because they are not the sort of people who consume their own smoke. When not on good terms with themselves they are apt to be troublesome to other nations. (*The Times*, November 16, 1898.)

The Army's decision in November to prosecute Picquart for forgery and communicating secret documents aroused a whirlwind of opposition. The Dreyfusards held that the General Staff had to dispose of Picquart before the trial should be reopened. To save the situation, the Cour de Cassation suspended the prosecution and impounded the documents. The Times "Review of the Year" gave over a column to the Dreyfus case, dwelling on the seriousness of the dangerous and acute dissensions it had caused in French society. Blowitz called 1899 "this Dreyfus Year" and gloomily looked forward to a revolution in Paris. There were further inquiries and delays in the beginning of the year, and The Times recommended thoughtful Frenchmen to ponder on the results of letting politics intrude into the judicial sphere. The President, Félix Faure, died suddenly on February 16, 1899, and was succeeded by Loubet. Meanwhile the Cour de Cassation had succeeded in forcing the War Office to surrender the secret dossier. now containing over 350 documents instead of the original four or five. Beginning on March 31, Figaro began publication of the verbatim reports of the evidence heard by the Cour de Cassation. This evidence covered the whole history of the case, including the treasured contents of the secret dossier. This was the first public revelation of the facts. The Times published extensive extracts from them and hoped that the time had come when this nightmare was to be ended. The case had shocked the civilized world. "and perhaps nowhere more seriously than in the very country upon which France has chiefly sought of late years to impress the value of her political and military alliance (May 29, 1899.)

On June 3, 1899, when the decision of the Cour de Cassation was imminent, The Times published a signed confession by Esterhazy that he had written the bordereau. The confession, in the form of an interview with a correspondent, had been brought to P.H.S. by F. C. Philips, the novelist, and William Graham, at 11.50 on the night of June 2. It was offered to the paper unconditionally, the terms to be arranged next morning with the management. It was the first signed confession that Esterhazy had made and Buckle and Chirol decided to accept it. While it was being set up, Graham returned with the news that Esterhazy had arranged for it to appear in the Daily Chronicle. The Editor declared his intention of publishing it, whether it appeared elsewhere or not, and Graham then began to haggle about terms. He was firmly told to call on the Manager in the morning, and the confession went forward for publication. At 1.45 a.m. a District Messenger brought a scribbled request from Esterhazy that publication should be stopped, but it was then too late to hold it up. The same day the decision of the Cour de Cassation in favour of a fresh trial was announced, Zola returned to France, Dreyfus sailed from Devil's Island on June 9, and Picquart was released after over a year's imprisonment. There was yet another change of Government in June, when M. Waldeck-Rousseau became Prime Minister.

The second trial of Dreyfus opened at Rennes on August 7, 1899. Four days later *The Times* published the following statement at the head of the foreign news:

We are in a position to state that, in addition to the communications of slight value enumerated in the bordereau, more than 160 documents of considerable importance were furnished to the German Military Attaché, Colonel Schwartzkoppen, at various times by Esterhazy, acting as intermediary for and accomplice of Henry. One of these documents contained detailed information relative to the general plan of mobilization for the French Army. The proceeds of this traffic were divided between Esterhazy and Henry. In Parisian diplomatic circles the latter was known to be the real traitor several months before his arrest and suicide; and, besides the Power most directly concerned—namely Germany—more than one European Government received information to this effect early in 1898.

Details of Esterhazy's transactions with Schwartzkoppen were first published in *The Times*. French newspapers all quoted from *The Times* report which came from H. Wickham Steed, who secured the information from Panizzardi, the former Italian Military Attaché in Paris, then in Italy, on condition that his name was not mentioned. Although Steed tried hard to persuade him to speak out. Panizzardi was not allowed by his Government to make a declaration of Dreyfus's innocence during the trial. As the trial went on it became clear that the generals still hoped to carry the day. *The Times* Special Correspondent found that the proceedings had degenerated into "odious and irrelevant tittle-tattle." Labori telegraphed the Kaiser on September 5, begging permission for Schwartzkoppen to come to Rennes, but Germany considered sufficient the specific denials by the Ambassador in Paris and by von Bülow in the Reichstag. On September 9 Dreyfus was found guilty of treason by five votes to two, and was sentenced to ten years'

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imprisonment. The Court added the strange rider that there were extenuating circumstances for his treachery.

There was a tremendous explosion of public indignation in England. Chirol wrote to Steed in September, 1899, that he had never known anything like it. The office was swamped with letters that were almost unanimous in their disgust. Many people wanted the paper to support a boycott of France and all her works, including the forthcoming Exhibition in Paris. On September 19, 1899, President Loubet granted Dreyfus a free pardon, but the correspondence was maintained in The Times until the end of the year. From a general discussion on the Rennes trial it developed into an intense controversy as to the part played by the Catholic Church. Steed had already hailed the verdict of the Cour de Cassation, June 3, as "a severe moral defeat for the Jesuit order, if not, indeed, for the Vatican itself." He was supported by a leading article (Ross) which deplored the attitude of the Church towards the case and accused the Vatican of encouraging a conspiracy against the Republic. Following the publication of this article Mgr. Stanley, The Times Vatican Correspondent, was informed by Mgr. Merry del Val that he could no longer countenance his correspondence with the paper. From August, 1899, the paper regarded the French Catholic Church as guilty of moral complicity in the anti-Dreyfus campaign, and a vast deal of space was given to theological wrangling. The ball was set rolling by Cardinal Vaughan. who attributed the poverty of the land to the Reformation; the state of Spain, Italy and Ireland did not persuade Printing House Square that a return to Catholicism would be a panacea for the social ills of England. On September 1, 1899, the paper drew attention to the powerful military and clerical forces opposed to Dreyfus at Rennes and expressed strong doubt as to a favourable verdict. In the same issue a long letter signed "Verax" held the French Catholic Press responsible for much of the demoralisation of the country. Catholic newspapers, often edited by ecclesiastics, had played a great part in stirring up racial and religious fanaticism, and no member of the hierarchy had tried to curb them. There was much speculation as to the identity of "Verax". Steed detected Chirol's style in the "Verax" letter, and wrote to him about it. Chirol wrote to Steed on September 27, 1899, saying that he would not mind his identity being disclosed except for the hurt to the feelings of his mother who was a Catholic. Drawing on his personal experience, "Verax" then denounced the French Catholic system of education in clerical schools, as most likely to produce the casuistic moral outlook of the military forgers and perjurers at Rennes. Cardinal Vaughan's reply to "Verax," published on September 4, evaded the accusation that the Church had fostered animosity to Dreyfus, irrespective of the truth of the case, and contented himself with the statement that a belief in Dreyfus's guilt was not confined to French Catholics. His reminder that France was very far from being a Catholic country was more to the point. As for French clerical education, he recalled his own very different experiences in a French Jesuit college. On September 7, 1899. "Verax" repeated his charges that religion was being used in France to cloak a propaganda of calumny and falsehood. His attack was reinforced next day by a letter from Lugano over the pseudonym "Vidi". Steed (for such was the identity of "Vidi") carried farther the criticism of Catholic clerical education. Moral deterioration and emasculation were part and parcel of the Catholic domination over the bodies and minds of men. Pupils from Jesuit schools "enter upon their professional careers pliant, subtle, fins but moral cripples for life". He had no doubt that "the foremost object of the directors of the Catholic anti-Dreyfusard campaign has been to regain for the Church her lost political, educational and spiritual hegemony over the French nation What did the innocence of one man weigh against that? Steed's message from Rome, published on September 13, 1899, occasioned a sensation. He stated that Cardinal Rampolla, Papal Secretary of State, had expressed strong delight at the Rennes verdict to a diplomat accredited to the Vatican. The diplomat was M. Sazonof, lately appointed Russian chargé d'affaires at the legation of the Holy See. The Osservatore Romano published an immediate démenti. A second letter from Cardinal Vaughan on September 18 excused the French bishops for not seeking to silence the opinions of the clergy and faithful on such a debatable matter, a position that, considering the part played by such papers as La Croix and Libre Parole, was not an easy one to defend. The Times in its leading article charged Vaughan with evading the realities of the indictment against the Catholic Church. Its offence was not that it counselled neutrality or moderation, but that it acquiesced in an unscrupulous campaign for unworthy ends conducted in a spirit of vindictive and scurrilous animosity. The leading articles in The Times of the Dreyfus period were written by Ross, Thursfield, E. D. J. Wilson, Humphry Ward, Chirol and Papillon. A serious consequence was the conviction in the minds of Chirol and Steed that the affair was a demonstration of the corruption of French political life and of the reactionary character of the Catholic Church. The Times was not unprepared to turn, by way of contrast, to France's comparatively tranquil, if bustling, neighbour, Germany. It remained the fact, however, that it was Germany which had bought in Paris the military information in which she was interested.

Steed, H. Wickham: Through Thirty Years. (2 vols., London, 1924.)

The account of Steed's introduction to journalism occurs in the first volume. For his interest in the Dreyfus case see I, 146-150.

Stillman, W. J.: Adventures of a Journalist. (2 vols., London, 1901.)

Francesco Crispi. (London, 1899.)

The Old Rome and the New. (London, 1927.)

Union of Italy. (Cambridge, 1909.)

William James Stillman (1828-1901) was born at Schenectady, N.Y. He studied landscape painting under Frederick Church and in December 1849, came to England, where he met J. M. W. Turner and began his long friendship with Ruskin. He returned to America in 1851 or 1852, where he joined Kossuth and went to Hungary. Later Stillman went to France. His first contact with journalism was made in New York when he became art critic for the Evening Post. He returned to Europe in 1860, and joined the group of D. G. Rossetti and Ruskin. In 1862 he became American Consul at Rome, and to Crete in 1865. He joined the Cretan revolutionaries in 1866, and two years later removed to Athens. He later came to London and acted as Greek Consul-General. His service for The Times began with his appointment as correspondent in Herzegovina in 1875 to report the insurrection. His activities extended to Montenegro and Albania, and he later was appointed to Rome where he was correspondent until 1898. (See the second volume of Stillman's autobiography; The Times, July 9, 1901, for his obituary.) His Union of Italy in the Cambridge Historical Series edited by G. W. Prothero represents Stillman's most permanent work.

Wertheimer, M.: The Pan-German League, 1890-1914. (New York, 1924.)

# XI. SAUNDERS AT BERLIN

Saunders, George: Snell Exhibitioner, Balliol College, Oxon. The Moral and Social State of the Christian Community before and after Constantine the Great; The Rector's Prize Essay, University of Glasgow, 1881. Printed at the University Press by James Maclehose, 1882.

Dedicated to Mr. Gladstone.

Bauermann, W.: Die "Times" und die Abwendung Englands von Deutschland, 1900. (Berlin, 1939.)

Carroll, E. Malcolm: Germany and the Great Powers, 1866-1914. (New York, 1938.)

Darcy, J.: France et Angleterre. Cent années de rivalité coloniale. L'Afrique. (Paris, 1904.)

Dehn, P.: Weltpolitische Neubildungen. (Berlin, 1905.) England und die Presse. (Berlin, 1915.)

Dibelius, W.: England. (English tr., London, 1930.)

Dreyer, J.: Deutschland und England in ihrer Politik und Presse im Jahre 1901. (Berlin, 1934.)

Farrer, J. A.: England under Edward VII. (London, 1922.)

The author, who acknowledges his reliance upon Professor Schiemann, assumes the responsibility of the British Press for bad Anglo-German relationship. At p. 52, speaking of the year 1902, he finds "The leading part in this Press crusade was played by The Times, which had for its special correspondent at Berlin a Mr. Saunders. This gentleman's animosity against Germany was so unconcealed, &c., that German action was provoked." There follows a report of the Saunders-Richthofen incident. The character of the book was well summarized in a review by the late J. W. Headlam Morley. (The Literary Supplement, August 17, 1922.) While in the author's opinion, as every one knows, the criticism which appeared in the columns of The Times on German policy produced a great effect at the time, the author had not read for himself "the articles [which] were written by a man who, living in Berlin in the closest touch with the German Foreign Office and German opinion, had formed for himself an independent judgment on the spot, a judgment which has since been abundantly confirmed . . . "."

The book is not a record of facts, but of German opinion about the facts, or, rather, of the opinions which the agents of the German Government at the time wanted other people to hold. On whatever subject it is tested—the growth of the German fleet, the fall of Delcassé, the conversations between the King and the Austrian Emperor—it is equally unsatisfactory. The truth is that Mr. Farrer has attempted a task which is beyond his knowledge and capacity.

Hale, Oron James: Germany and the Diplomatic Revolution. (Philadelphia, 1931.)

Publicity and Diplomacy. (New York, 1940.)

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Hammann, O.: Zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges. (Berlin, 1919.)

Herkenberg, K. O.: Die "Times" und das deutsch-englische Verhältnis im Jahre 1898 (Berlin, 1925), with an introduction by Martin Spahn.

Ignotus (J. L. Garvin): "Germany and England" in the Fortnightly Review, April, 1901, pp. 663-674.

Ends with an extract from a dispatch (see *The Times*, February 9, 1901) by Saunders, "a singularly acute and well-informed student of German politics".

Lehmann, J.: Die Aussenpolitik der Kölnischen Zeitung während der Bülowzeit. (Köln, 1937.)

Loeb, M.: Der papierne Feind. (Augsburg, 1918.)

Lorenz, Theodor: Die englische Presse. (Berlin, 1906.)

Plehn, H.: Nach dem japanisch-englischen Bündnis. (Berlin, 1907.)

Primke, W.: Die Politik der "Times" von der Unterzeichnung des Jangtseabkommens bis zum Ende der deutsch-englischen Bündnisbesprechungen, Oktober, 1900 bis Mai, 1901. (Berlin, 1935.)

Schiemann, Theodor: Deutschland und die grosse Politik. (Vols. I-VIII, Berlin, 1902-9.)
Wie England eine Verständigung mit Deutschland verhindert hat. (Berlin, 1915.)

Schoettle, H.: Die "Times" in der ersten Marokkokrise. (Berlin, 1930.)

Schulze-Gaevernitz, G.: Deutschland und England. (Berlin, 1908.)

The monographs above listed review, essentially or incidentally, the period in which Saunders began to attract the attention of contemporaries. Saunders entered upon his correspondentship of The Times on January 7, 1897. The year was quiet as regards Anglo-German official relations and the German Press notes no change for better or worse; nor in the following year when Far Eastern affairs entered upon a new phase is the general attitude of *The Times* complained of. While the leading articles are quoted in the German Press, they do not arouse much comment—even when worded in a way that hurt the ever-increasingly susceptible German pride—for example, the article of January 1, 1898. Spahn's and Herkenberg's comments are "post festum," and their indignation is not an echo of contemporary criticism. At the time, it would seem that the comparatively friendly tone of The Times and other British papers was regarded somewhat suspiciously. German scribes saw in it an attempt to draw Germany to the English side and thus estrange her from Russia, now that developments in the Far East threatened a clash between British and Russian interests. This is the probable reason for the Vossische Zeitung's reminder, in its issue of January 18, 1898, that Britain should not be too sure of German support. The Times, it is said, rightly assumes that the German Press seconds British policy that Russia must not be granted privileges in China, but it does not follow that Britain herself could claim special favours. The Vossische Zeitung is sarcastic about the value of British threats to Russia, &c., and leaves the general impression that the Germans are well aware of the motives lying behind what was regarded as a manifestation of sudden British friendliness. Generally speaking, the Vossische Zeitung is rather anti-English in this period. (cf. The Times, Feb. 4.) Darcy (pp. 310 ff.) seems to think that the breakdown of the negotiations with France over the Niger problem may have contributed to the desire for an Anglo-German rapprochement expressed in the English Press in general and several articles and dispatches of The Times in particular; but there is no confirmation of this in the contemporary German Press. In March, however, Anglo-German relations suddenly worsen. The German policy with regard to Crete is strongly attacked in the English Press, and the National-Zeitung (March 18), with obvious triumph, states that the anger shown by *The Times* is the best proof that Germany's attitude to Near Eastern problems is the right one. Herkenberg (p. 74) thinks that Britain's annoyance was an expression of the disappointment felt in England over Germany's not having fallen into the trap set by British policy. Official policy was still in favour of a rapprochement, but the Kölnische Zeitung (April 30) obviously inspired, lays it down that Germany is not to be procured to serve England as a vanguard against Russia. (cf. Lehmann, p. 164.) According to Lehmann (l.c.), this was enough to bring The Times back to its former anti-German attitude. For obvious reasons, British-Russian tension was carefully studied in the German Press, but not to the neglect of affairs in Equatorial Africa. The attitude of the German Press toward the Sudan campaign was acknowledged as friendly by Saunders. His remark that this was due largely to official dictation was not taken notice of, although it was exactly in the vein of his later criticisms which were so violently objected to. Saunders consistently drew a clear distinction between the policy of the Government as reported in the Press and the feelings of the nation so far as they were of significance for the present and the immediate future. But the correspondent was not yet marked as one unable to do right. That moment came with the South African war. In The Times History of the War in South Africa, edited for P.H.S. by L. S. Amery, the effect of the declaration of war is well stated at Vol. I, p. 15:

The whole of Europe was against us, not so much from any consideration of the merits of the case, as from that dislike and jealousy of England which has developed so enormously in the course of the last decade. The Governments of the Great Powers in general maintained a consistently correct attitude towards Great Britain; but with the people, and above all with the Press, it was very different. It has often been said that the European hatred of the British Empire is due to jealousy of our success. That is only partly the truth. The jealousy undoubtedly exists, but it has sprung mainly from a belief that our success is undeserved, based solely on arrogant pretence supported neither by real military strength, moral courage, nor patriotism.

That the feelings of the German people corresponded with this description cannot be doubted by readers of the journals lying outside the range of official inspiration. It is not to the point to say, as some historians do, that many of the journals quoted by Saunders were obscure and did not represent the views of official circles. The opinion of the non-political circles of any country is revealed in the local Press to an extent unusual in the metropolitan Press. In Berlin the daily Press expressed the deliberate calculations of the official, commercial, political and intellectual circles rather than the spontaneous feelings of ordinary Germans. The war began on October 12, 1899. On the following day, Saunders as O.O.C. wired that "We should be thoroughly aware that we do not possess it [German good will] and that the increasing popularity of many German movements, such as the endeavour to create a strong navy, largely results from considerations relating to the future relative positions of the British Empire and of Germany as factors in the balance of power throughout the world". This was Saunders's conviction and he supported it with quotations from the Press, mainly unofficial and provincial. It meant little to him that the official Press maintained an attitude that was so correct as to cloak the realities of the situation, important for the future as for the present. Apart from other evidence, the stream of atrocities, lies, false allegations, and criticisms in the dailles and cartoons in the weeklies, based for the most part upon "news" faked in London by Germans and printed in the German Press under false date-lines, proved, Saunders thought, that the Germans at heart were anti-British. That was what mattered. German officials were naturally hurt at the suggestion.

Bauermann, an authentic Nazi, writing in 1939, assumes moral superiority over the old régime and omnîscience towards P.H.S. On p. 8 of his *Die "Times,"* &c., he asserts that everybody knows that the Prime Minister of the day is always able to influence the paper. This is his explanation of the paper's having failed to support Chamberlain—it had been nobbled by Salisbury, a statement he repeats at p. 47 when dealing with the leading article of November 20, 1899. Regarding German attacks on Britain, he says (p. 18) that "the language of *The Times* towards the Transvaal was responsible—it provoked retaliation by the European Press". Saunders played a "disastrous" (unheilvolle) role, proving it by citing (p. 22) his "Schadenfreude" article of October 13, 1899. Regarding Bülow's Windsor memorandum mentioning Chirol and Saunders as knowing from their own experience the depth of German dislike of England, Bauermann says:

Certainly, one has to admit in favour of the correspondent the fact that many German papers used, particularly after the outbreak of the Boer war, which they considered as a predatory war, an excited language. . . There is no doubt that some papers behaved rather stupid politically. As early as September 20, Bülow had directed the German Press to use a moderate language during the South African crisis. It is true that this suggestion had not been very successful. But it is to be said that, in those days, the attitude of the Reich Government was most strictly neutral and correct.

But, proceeds the doctorandus, "nothing of that is mentioned by Saunders in those days [the German Government had not yet declared itself] and therefore the Wilhelmstrasse was right in being rather angry. It seems that Saunders was informed hereof at a very early date; for he writes, on October 17, a report which looks like a personal defence".

The extracts from the German Press, as selected by Saunders and as reprinted in The Times, produced upon readers at home the effect they had in the first instance produced upon the correspondent. This was an inconvenience to the Wilhelmstrasse's policy of profiting by British embarrassments. Hence Bülow's first effort to get Saunders out of Germany (Bülow to Hatzfeldt, November 15, 1899), his second a week later at Windsor, and his third through Lord Rothschild six months later. The New Year brought no consolation to Bülow. On March 30, 1900, Kölnische Zeitung redoubled its efforts to convince its readers that it was the policy of The Times to set England and Germany against each other. The immediate occasion—a dispatch of The Times regarding an insult to the German flag in Australia and the refusal of the Australian authorities to take appropriate action (for the diplomatic representations concerning this incident see Metternich, March 19, 1900, G.P. XV, p. 484)—was used for all its worth by the Cologne paper. The temper of the Germans towards the British and vice versa was certainly not improving. Thus the Kölnische Zeitung of April 7, 1900, in a leading article, headed "The German-baiting of The Times," denounced the insinuations of the Berlin

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Correspondent as "of an unheard-of perfidy. . . . We protest against the machinations of *The Times* as being unworthy of a great newspaper addressing educated readers". The *Vossische Zeitung* of April 9, 1900, testified its surprise at the attacks of *The Times* on the German Press and the German comic papers, on the ground that what they published was infinitely less aggressive and offensive than some of the material concerning the Queen and the Prince of Wales published in England. Two days later the Government took Saunders's telegrams in hand. An official statement was put in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* on April 11, 1900, and reprinted in the *National-Zeitung* of the same day:

For some time The Times has been indulging itself in holding the German Government responsible for offensive attacks published in German comic papers against members of the English Royal Family. It is said in an article of the 6th inst. (here follows a summary of the article). . . But this is mere indiscriminate insinuation and misrepresentation of the existing legal situation (follows an analysis of the Press and criminal law in Germany). . . We hardly expect The Times to learn its lesson from this statement of German Press and criminal law and to abstain from insinuating that the German Government patronises offensive excesses of the Press, since the paper (The Times) has lately shown an unusual degree of tendentious

lying in its reports about German affairs.

At about the same time the Grenzboten entered even stronger protests against Saunders and The Times. "It would hardly be possible to judge the mentality of the German people with more vileness and meanness. Contempt, hatred, insinuations of all possible unfair motives, bitter mockery, distortion" &c., were the weapons of The Times (thus W. Rolfs, "Englische Meinungsmache," in Grenzboten, Vol. 59, I (1900). The Anglo-German accord of October 16, 1900, seemed to presage better relations as it announced a common policy in China. It soon became plain, however, that German policy, whatever it was, promised no support for Britain against Russia. The attitude of The Times towards the abortive "alliance" in 1901 was not uninfluenced by Saunders's reports. The collapse of the Chamberlain talks was the end of more than a mere exploration (see the notes to chapter XII). A new and particularly vigorous campaign is caused by the Sipido affair (Kölnische Zeitung, April 7, 1900; National-Zeitung, April 11 and 12, 1900; Hamburgischer Korrespondent, April 12, 1900; Vossische Zeitung, April 11 and 12, 1900). The question of Saunders's deportation was now for the first time discussed in the German Press. His attitude in the matter of the Yangtze treaty and Anglo-German relations at the end of 1900 are animadverted upon by Primke, p. 46; Bauermann, p. 59; his attitude towards the Yangtze problem in 1901 by Bauermann, p. 70. The attacks of Tille, who recommends a political and social boycott of the correspondent, are at p. 622. German reactions to Saunders's attitude during the Chamberlain-Bülow duel (1901-1902) are available in Treue, W.: "Presse und Politik in Deutschland und England während des Burenkrieges" in Berliner Monatshefte XI, 1935, p. 748; Doc. Dipl. Franç. II, I, No. 537, p. 634. The Daily News (Dehn, England und die Presse, p. 29) denounced him as a danger.

It is not necessary to claim infallibility or even impartiality for the whole of his reporting. It cannot, indeed, be denied that at least in the dispatches sent during the first months of the war an obvious deep bias against Germany led him into exaggerated suspicion of some German utterances. On the other hand it is certain that he was correct in his view that the German nation absolutely disliked the neutral attitude of the Government. The historian considering the messages of a journalist in the service of a daily newspaper, and above all of a Foreign Correspondent, is called upon to allow a reasonable margin of inaccuracy and distortion due to haste on the part of the Correspondent, errors in telegraphic transmission, incorrect extension of abbreviated messages by sub-editors and injudicious "cuts" by sub-editors. It is difficult for the historian writing, say, a generation or more after the event to put himself in the position of the Foreign Correspondent or the Editor. Moreover, the historian who himself may lack first-hand experience of journalism has difficulty in realizing the degree to which the conditions of a journalist's life affect his work. A Foreign Correspondent's safest method of avoiding contemporary criticism is generally to ask his head office for a "line" and adhere to it; or to seek the direction of the departmental offices of the Capital to which he has been sent, and to adhere to that; or even if he wishes to be on really good terms with the permanent officials, to base his messages directly upon the text of the official communiqués or the statements in the semi-official Press; perhaps, when given the hint, to take the trouble to use words of his own. At P.H.S. it has for generations been the practice to avoid giving any instructions to the correspondent other than to preserve independence. In MacDonald's time an "Own Correspondent" interpreted this as an instruction to avoid officials, an interpretation that was later modified. In Wallace's view, "a correspondent who is not on intimate confidential terms with those who really know what is going on, is compelled to grope about in the dark" The speciality of The Times, he once informed Chirol, who had been seeing Caprivi, ought to be that its correspondents "know a great deal more than other people, and that they are in such relation with the people behind the scenes that there is no danger of their getting on a wrong track; in all this there is nothing inconsistent with independence of judgment". (Wallace to Chirol, July 6, 1892.) The reason for Chirol's withdrawal

from Berlin was precisely that the German, i.e., Holstein's and Marschall's, idea of a journalist was to admit him only if he abstained from criticizing their policy. In other words, they wished to treat Chirol as if he were a German whose admission to the confidence of the chiefs of the Foreign Office was granted as a reward for compliance. The practice reposed, as Chirol saw, upon a low view of the personality and profession of the journalist. The Times had no alternative but to make a change. Bell and Wallace appointed Saunders, who came to be far less welcome than Chirol, and who, as he could not avail himself of Wallace's method, evolved his own. It is true that Saunders's methods of reporting differed from those of all the other British correspondents in Berlin. Bashford of the Daily Telegraph, Maxwell of the Standard, Harrison of Reuter's regarded themselves as, generally speaking, reporters of facts; the official German attitude was for them one of the facts that mattered, and in many respects the only fact that mattered. Outbursts of popular feeling, regrettable as they might be, were unimportant as long as the official attitude remained correct; further, they assumed that the task of the German Government, which, after all, was in the British interest, would be unnecessarily aggravated if much were made of the state of public opinion. The value of public opinion as an index of future political orientation was not a matter of immediate concern, as the official attitude was. It is true and is generally admitted to-day (cf. Hammann. p. 57), and Saunders was well aware of the fact, that the German Government had a motive for stemming the pro-Boer outbursts. He knew too that the Government, despite its power, had no practicable possibility, either in law or in fact, of bringing to bear pressure on the Press as a whole. Therein lay the interest of the local papers. They were negligible; they were even silly but they printed what was, in fact, being thought and said by Germans. As a contemporary register of German feeling the German local Press was obviously of value. It by no means followed that its demands need have any immediate effect upon Government policy and for this reason Saunders often described its importance as negligible. But Saunders always accepted the Press, particularly that section of it which was free from official guidance, as representative of opinion that needed to be taken into account even if it was not yet operative. The German Liberals found it difficult to understand how Saunders could at one time allege, and at another deny, that the German Press was of importance. His attitude puzzles more than one Liberal historian to-day, to the same degree as it exasperated his Liberal contemporaries. The German explanation is that he was acting according to orders from Bell or Chirol. who directed him to report everything anti-German, and to report only that which was unfavourable to Germany. The fact is that whether the official or unofficial Press was important or unimportant depended for Saunders entirely upon what was being said. It need not be important for Saunders if, in 1899, the officially used Press printed pro-English paragraphs, but it might well be important if the unofficial Press printed anti-English matter. The Times left the matter to the discretion of its carefully chosen correspondent "on the spot". The German Liberal view of Saunders was that he was a menace to good Anglo-German relations, since these, in the Liberal view, depended upon the harmony between Englishmen and Germans. Given good will, no serious disturbance to friendship between the two countries need be feared. This was the view also of the English Liberals. It is the view of Professor Fay and of Professor Hale. Saunders's insistence that most Germans did not want British good will and would not reciprocate it spoilt the Liberal dream. The reaction was naturally sharp. It is expressed in the evening edition of the Vossische Zeitung for June 11, 1902, in words that would be acceptable to Professor Hale although he does not print the extract from that Liberal and generally pro-English journal. It would serve as a text for his, as for Dr. Lorenz's and Dr. Bauermann's, denunciations of Saunders:

Those who have observed for a long period the activities of the Berlin correspondent of The Times must admit that they seem to be directed systematically towards setting the two countries against each other. A person who has lived for so long a time amongst us as Mr. Saunders has, and who has had ample opportunity to make himself acquainted with the true opinions of the politically important and educated circles, needs must bear the blame of deliberate misrepresentation if he should dish up almost daily to his readers a stew of adverse criticisms the components of which he has scraped together indiscriminately from everywhere. Any exaggeration produced by pan-German over-zeal is used as an argument against ourselves and is alleged to show a most dangerous hostility against England. One who reads only The Times must necessarily get, gradually, ineradicably false views about the public spirit in Germany. It is not a nice business which Mr. Saunders pursues; the question is merely whether he is doing it on his own or whether he is simply carrying out the orders of the London headquarters. Knowing as we do the Vienna reports, one would be inclined to believe in a general anti-German instruction for all the correspondents of the City paper. The pernicious seed they are sowing cannot, it is true, do the harm they hope for, because The Times, as we have been repeatedly assured from various quarters, does not possess to-day that influence. either on the Government or on the public, which it used in earlier times to have. We do not grudge The Times for not liking us, but we are entitled to ask that it fights us with clean weapons.

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The extent to which the Press is a manipulative device, and to which its effectiveness as such a device was placed on the side of peace are naturally questions that need to be considered by diplomatic historians. The interest of historians outside Germany in such questions follows the publication of Mr. Walter Lippmann's *Public Opinion* (New York, 1922), which includes a chapter on "The Newspapers". (pp. 317-327.) The questions are touched on in Sidney Bradshaw Fay: The Origins of the World War (New York, first edition, 1928, second edition, revised, 1930). In the introductory chapter to this work, now in its 14th impression, Professor Fay lists at Vol. I, pp. 47-9, the newspaper Press as one of the immediate and underlying causes of the war. The Press, he says, is a subject which is only beginning to receive the attention it deserves. The newspapers of all countries misrepresented the situation from time to time, embarrassed Ministers, and envenomed international relations. "Newspapers of two countries often took up some point of dispute, exaggerated it, and made attacks and counter-attacks, until a regular newspaper war was engendered, which thoroughly poisoned public opinion and so offered a fertile soil in which the seeds of real war might germinate." The Austro-Serbian Press agitation during the weeks after Sarajevois cited as an example. (It will be considered in Vol. IV of "The History of The Times" Fay hopes that "some careful scholars will turn their attention to this problem of the influence of the newspaper Press as one of the underlying causes of war". (p. 49.) As examples of the study he had in mind, he cites Professor E. M. Carroll, "French Public Opinion in the War of 1870" in the American Historical Review of July, 1926, and Miss Irene Cooper Willis, How we Went into the War (London, 1918). In 1930 Professor Fay made a contribution of his own to this aspect of the causes of war: "The influence of the pre-war Press in Europe" (in Current History, XXIII, November, 1930, pp. 212-7; revised and reprinted in book form Booker 1932; carroll 1933; carroll 1934; car 1930, pp. 212-7; revised, and reprinted in book form, Boston, 1932: expanded German version, "Der Einfluss der Vorkriegspresse in Europa," in the Berliner Monatshefte X, May, 1932, pp. 411, ff.). Professor Fay's study, which was begun as a review of Vol. IV of Gooch and Temperley, published in 1930, makes the sound observation that "it is the habit of the Continental Press, of German papers, and especially of French and Italian editors to express themselves in far stronger language than does the more stolid and reasonable Anglo-Saxon editorial writer". (Current History, p. 215.) It is true that German writers take considerable licence, but it is perhaps bold to draw the inference that Anglo-German relations were disturbed, as the professor seems to suggest (at p. 215), merely by Grey's not having allowed for the furor teutonicus. The language of the Press no doubt embitters discussion, but there is little evidence that furor initiates political developments, still less changes in policy. It is natural for writers to lay stress upon the importance of writing, and it is not uncommon to find journalists unconsciously exaggerating the importance of their function. But the more experienced journalist working on a London daily is aware that influence is exerted by a writer who possesses the power of logical exposition, calm persuasion and ability to comment in the light of adequate knowledge of the personalities and of the relevant and immediately impending events. Writing before the publication of the "History of The Times," Professor Fay has not escaped errors of fact. On the text of Lascelles's dispatch of January 30, 1908, reporting the Kaiser's objection to the tone of the English Press, Professor Fay says (Current History, p. 213) that, "at the beginning of the 20th century, the London Times, which before the war had the reputation of being the greatest and most influential news-paper in the world, had already come under the control of Alfred Harmsworth, better known as Lord Northcliffe". As Professor Fay repeats this statement in the German version, and in terms appreciably stronger than those of his English original, it is preferable to refer to it. "The influence of the Northcliffe Press abroad, and particularly in Germany, made itself felt in a disastrous way by rousing hostility against England, just as it showed itself in Great Britain by the incitement of Germanophobia." (Berliner Monatshefte, X, May, 1932, p. 423.) Moreover:

Northcliffe and his foreign correspondents, e.g., Valentine Chirol and Saunders in Berlin, Wickham Steed in Vienna, were already convinced at the beginning of the 20th century that Germany would sooner or later attack France by surprise. For them, the menace of German militarism was an established fact, just as was the necessity to make the British public conscious of it. Therefore, they made use of every opportunity to draw attention, sometimes even in an exaggerated way, to German naval and military armaments. They accentuated the dangerous influence of the militarists in the German Civil Service and often picked from German papers without any influence quotations which seemed to confirm their apprehensions, publishing them in an English translation in London. These nationalistic articles from small German local papers often did not give a true picture of German public opinion, but they served Northcliffe's aims. . . . Following their publication in London and the circulation of the English version in Germany, of course criticism was raised and hostile replies were published which created bad feelings on both sides. In this way, The Times and the Daily Mail contributed to create in England an atmosphere of distrust and hostility which infected Sir Edward Grey and public opinion.

Hence the war grew out of the "bad feelings" engendered by journalistic recrimination, without which the "bad feelings" would not have arisen. The responsibility lies with

The Times and its writers. Professor Fay (p. 426) cannot say much for them. That the writers named should endeavour to strengthen the entente, to increase the British Navy, &c., might justify the description of Northcliffe and his collaborators, to a certain degree, as patriots. But "This is hardly to be admitted". To appreciate their merits in this way, "one would have to assume that the world war was inevitable and that Germany had far-reaching and long prepared plans to secure hegemony in Europe; and that was not the case. The continuous publication in the press of statements to the effect that Germany would make war inevitable, was the best means of creating that atmosphere of distrust and hostility which, in fact, it was intended to create, in order to make war inevitable" (our italics). Thus, according to Professor Fay, Northcliffe "and his collaborators" "intended to create" the war by stating "continuously" what was not the case, i.e., that Germany had far-reaching and well-laid schemes to secure hegemony in Europe. Thus Northcliffe is blamed for the reporting of a correspondent who served The Times eleven years before his arrival at P.H.S.

Carroll, E. Malcolm: French Public Opinion and Foreign Affairs, 1870-1914 (New York, 1931),

gives the subject scientific treatment for the first time. The introductory chapter "The Problem" defines the term "Public Opinion" and the degree to which the elements of society, e.g., the Chiefs of State, the administration, Parliament and the Press, lead or otherwise affect it, and discusses the possibility of distinguishing and weighing their influences. The description of the political Press in Paris and the provinces, which follows, includes an account of its occasional or permanent dependence upon subsidy. The author traces the reaction of the British and German Press upon the French at major points of crisis and supports his investigation with a rich documentation which includes the diplomatic papers, historical monographs, daily newspapers, weekly satirical publications, the monthly reviews and novels. The book is a broad survey and a model of its kind.

Hale, Oron James: Germany and the Diplomatic Revolution, A Study in Diplomacy and the Press, 1904-1906 (Philadelphia, 1931),

appeared almost simultaneously. Professor Hale takes up the inquiry to which Professor Fay pointed in his The Origins of the World War. By "diplomatic revolution, he understands the changes symbolized by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, the Entente Cordiale and the estrangement of Germany. The author studies them as influenced by or reflected in public opinion and the periodical Press. Professor Hale originally began his book with "the assumption that press content was an accurate index to the public mind" but research led him to recognize in the Press "an active agency shaping the relations of the Powers. It is therefore an institution deserving investigation in its own right in addition to its function as a gauge of public attitudes". The author has incorporated from State papers what was necessary to delineate the rôle played by the Press. That role, Professor Hale thinks (p. 211), implied grave dangers to peace. The recently published documents "clearly show that there were no outstanding questions of a nature to occasion a sharp conflict". On the other hand a survey of the Press clearly shows evidence of tension. If it was the conviction of neutral observers between 1904 and 1906 that the greatest danger to the peace of Europe and of the world lay in the growing antagonism between Germany and England, it was, the Professor states, "based upon the attitude of mutual hostility and ill-will assumed by the Press". The war appears to have been the creation of journalists. "From the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war to Algeciras, Anglo-German Press relations formed an unbroken chain of misunderstandings, false statements, malicious suppositions, invidious criticisms, and acrimonious polemics. While official relations were correct, if not cordial, the Press seemed bent on maintaining such an atmosphere of suspicion and hostility in the public mind that an incident might have precipitated an armed conflict." Thus Professor Hale's judgment is virtually that of Professor Fay, whose paragraph (see above) arguing that the poisoning of public opinion by the newspaper Press was an underlying cause of the war is quoted with approval at p. 3. Professor Hale's opinions as to the function of the Press in international relations are in part, he says, the outcome of numerous discussions with Mr. G. W. Cadbury of Birmingham. His own standpoint appears to be that of an idealistic Liberal and of an admirer of the Westminster Gazette under J. A. Spender.

Hale, Oron James: Publicity and Diplomacy with Special Reference to England and Germany, 1890-1914. (New York, 1940.)

Professor Hale here supersedes in part his earlier book (see above: Germany and the Diplomatic Revolution, 1931). By "publicity" he understands the principal modes of enlistment of public interest, news reporting, the expression and circulation of opinion in the periodical Press, and the broadcasting of agitational literature; the whole viewed as a medium in which diplomacy works and by which it is surrounded. The introductory chapter presents a historical survey of "publicity" mainly of the 19th and 20th centuries as directed from official, semi-official, party, individual or other private sources. The relations of the English journalists to their parties and the closeness of their intimacy with their respective political leaders, is contrasted with the position of German journalists. The emergence of the New Journalism in England under Stead, "T.P.," Harmsworth

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and Pearson is described and the difficulties thus created for *The Times* indicated (pp. 19-22), fairly though not without inaccuracy. The paper's chief Foreign Correspondents and the paper's "news and editorial policy" from the Boer War to 1914 are marked as "consistently anti-German". Saunders is "temperamentally unsuited to the German atmosphere; he developed a deep antipathy to the country and its civilization". Professor Hale, however, inclines to the view that "too much" emphasis should not be placed upon the personality of the Berlin Correspondent. Probably more important was the policy laid down by the editors in London. Nevertheless, he proceeds immediately to say that, "firmly convinced that the rising power of Germany is a menace to London and the Empire—political, economic and naval—the Berlin Correspondent selects and reports those events that fit the pattern". He adds that "the Vienna Correspondent, Wickham Steed, observes and reports every reaction of German policy in the lands of the Dual Monarchy. In Paris, William Lavino notes every sign of German intrigue against England and English policy. And so it goes on around the world." The estimate closely resembles that of Lorenz and other German writers. The Professor thus sums up: "The result of the correspondence in *The Times* is a picture of Germany and German policy, which in its details may be true, but which taken on a whole is an artificial creation."

Professor Hale thinks the "result" of our own correspondence in *The Times* is false to the events—i.e., to Tangier, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Agadir. Regarding Saunders, Professor Hale uses severe language: "Angling or slanting of the report to fit the news policy is easily detected in the Berlin Correspondent's reports on German Press opinion." (p. 22.) This serious charge appears to mean that "by assembling editorial opinion from several journals and ignoring others, almost any kind of impression could be made". (p. 22.) Saunders did not furnish an inclusive précis of all the newspapers that were established in the esteem of political observers, but he selected for telegraphing expressions and opinions of journals that the correspondent had reason to regard as characteristic of potentially significant trends. Saunders, Steed and Lavino took their policy from the leading articles, we are told. (p. 22.) There is no evidence of anything of the kind, and it would be contrary to the practice of a century. All Saunders did was to transmit matter extracted from journals which he believed appealed to wide circles of Germans. The range and degree of acceptance of the kleine Presse justified the sending of extracts from journals of no international reputation. Professor Hale, as a historian, would doubtless prefer a report representative of the Press as a whole; that, for him, would be "public opinion". As it was, *The Times* most frequently quoted, he finds, "the fantasies of the Pan-German Press, the turgid squirts (sic) of the Krupp-controlled Berliner Neueste Nachrichten, and the nationalistic dogmas of the Post, the National Zeitung, and the semi-official Kölnische Zeitung. Rarely were the moderate Vossische Zeitung, Berliner Tageblatt, or Frankfurter Zeitung quoted. Readers served daily with fare like this must have concluded that the German people were straining at the leash in their eagerness for war with England". (p. 22.) Evidence is plentiful, as Saunders's dispatches prove, that war with England, however far from the calculations of the Government, would not have been unpopular in the correspondent's early period. Bülow wrote to Hatzfeldt in the summer of 1898 concerning the Delagoa Bay agreement: "In giving England a free hand with regard to Delagoa Bay and its hinterland, we take a step that will stir up in the entire German nation a feeling of painful resentment. A year before the outbreak of the South African War Bülow could assure Hatzfeldt that "with the passage of years the Boers have become an object of sentimental sympathy". (Billow to Hatzfeldt, June 22, 1898.) Neither this "resentment against" Britain nor this "sentimental sympathy" for the Boers was the creation of the Press or an invention of Saunders. The feeling was widespread, but it did not necessarily find expression in the metropolitan papers of established reputation which were conventionally quoted by international journalists. Professor Hale considers the Deutsche Zeitung "unimportant so far as the German newspaper public was concerned," since it was so unbalanced and chauvinistic. The paper, he says (p. 55), "was better known to readers of the London Times than to the people of Berlin," thanks to Saunders. But the editor, Friedrich Lange, was an associate of Karl Peters and a power in the Pan-German League, and if the Deutsche Zeitung in the period 1895-1908 was comparatively less well known in Berlin and less quoted abroad than other journals, it by no means followed that, in Saunders's view, the editorial policy was "insignificant," as Professor Hale suggests, and had no support in the country. The paper, like the German nation as a whole, was opposed to the Government's policy of abandoning Delagoa Bay. The criticism of official policy was most outspoken in the nationalist Press which, Professor Hale later admits, "no one in official position could lightly ignore". (p. 180.) Moreover, Professor Hale (p. 184) lays upon "the neo-Bismarckians, the Pan-German professors, the colonialists, and the lunatic fringe of German political life" the chief responsibility for the pressure against an Anglo-German understanding. Saunders held the same view. The South African War could not fail to increase German Anglophobia. The unrestrained expression of German dislike confirmed Saunders in the belief that they represented no mere passing emotion but the deepest feelings of the German population which gave, and would give, their Government all the backing needed for Weltpolitik. He thought Britain needed to take these into consideration. Yet, in Professor Hale's opinion (p. 204), Saunders's

estimate was incorrect, his reporting was biased, and his messages, as a series, misleading and mischievous. He was alone in the whole group of Berlin Correspondents attached to the British Press. It is true that Saunders took an independent line, "apparently with the full approval of Chirol and Moberly Bell," but, says Professor Hale (p. 205):

Under the impact of Boeritis and Anglophobia which he encountered on all sides, he completely lost his balance, and his dispatches often degenerated (p. 206) into tirades against everything German. To what extent mass sentiment in Germany was moved by genuine sympathy for the Boers and how much by innate dislike of the English people and their symbols of power is a question to which there is no answer. From the beginning Saunders took the line that pro-Boer sympathies were only an excuse and an occasion for the expression of ancient and chronic Anglophobia. Assurances that official policy remained uninfluenced by the storm in the Press he brushed aside as of little consequence in the face of the incontestable will of the German populace. When the Kölnische Zeitung made a slip in its plea for a realistic attitude towards the struggle in South Africa and recommended reserve and a free hand in view of possible eventualities [the paper said regarding the end of the war that "As a matter of course, Germany keeps her hands free for this eventuality, in order to be able to vindicate her interests as becomes a Great Power"], he seized upon it as an official statement (which it probably was) and, giving it a malignant interpretation, he described it as the policy "of a hyena or a vulture of the battlefields," &c. (October 20, 1899.)

## Saunders's words were that:

The last sentence [in square brackets supra] is undoubtedly the kernel of the whole article, and makes it important to ascertain whether it is semi-official or not. In no official quarter have I found any support for the assumption that Germany's attitude is that of a hyena or a vulture of the battlefield waiting for the issue of the fray in order to prey upon the vanquished. On the contrary, the German attitude has invariably been described to me not only as neutral but as "loyally neutral," &c.

Professor Hale refrains from quoting this passage, but says (p. 206) that:

When the Kölnische Zeitung protested against this interpretation, Saunders devoted a full column to lecturing the editor and the German Foreign Office, and then stepped before *The Times* audience to take a bow for having performed a deed of great national importance.

Moreover, says Professor Hale (at p. 206):

Saunders never forgot the slip made by the semi-official organ, and, on the average of once a week, he dragged it into his dispatches. In that one sentence he purported to find the real key and the true meaning of official German policy. Neutrality and friendship were but a cloak for foul design that would mature in the future against the British Empire. Saunders further reported every excess of pro-Boerism and Anglophobia that appeared in the German Press, and himself undertook the task of refuting and denying all rumours and unsubstantial charges. For completely usurping the editorial function, he made an ingenuous excuse: "I know that it is not primarily my business to reply to these regrettable ebullitions of what I must really designate unintelligent German feeling, but my excuse and my reason is that I sincerely desire to show how futile this journalistic blank shot is in order to prevent the calamity of its being taken seriously in England." (The Times, October 20, 1899.) While most of the British correspondents tended to play down popular hostility and to focus attention on the loyalty of the Government, Saunders went to the other extreme.

Professor Hale does not complete his quotation with Saunders's conclusion: "I have high authority for adding that in adopting this course I am doing a service to the great nation whose generous hospitality I have for so many years enjoyed." (The Times, October 20, 1899.) Instead he adds the footnote (44, at p. 206):

Isolated from other materials and studied in series, Saunders's dispatches show how a great untruth can be established by reporting selected facts. The most significant dispatches in the early days of the war are October 2, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 26, November 4, 11, 20, 25, December 27.

When Chamberlain's comparison of the German and British Armies, misquoted as it was all over Germany, led to a new outburst of unrestrained abuse of every aspect of British policy, the representatives of the London Press in Berlin were, says Professor Hale (p. 249), markedly reserved. They emphasized the Government's lack of sympathy with the dangerous popular agitation. Saunders, unlike his colleagues, reported the agitation in detail and consciously, or unconsciously, sharpened every unlovely feature. These reports, it is said (p. 249), formed the basis of bitter editorial comment. But the leading article quoted (footnote 56) from The Times by Professor Hale, though forcibly written, hardly deserves the epithet "bitter" and in any case is feebleness itself compared with the language of the German Press. It ended by saying that "It would be an unfortunate day for the nations if the belief were to gain ground in England that . . . the

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passionate enmity of the German people must be regarded as a more powerful and permanent factor in moulding the relations of the two countries than the wise and friendly statesmanship of German rulers". (November 20, 1901.) That Saunders's estimate of the situation was not as inaccurate or as untruthful as Professor Hale suggests is clear from the message of Reuter's correspondent, quoted by Professor Hale on p. 250 as having been circulated on November 25, 1901:

The lesson taught by the whole [Chamberlain speech] affair is very obvious. The hysterical talk of professors, veterans. Pan-Germans, and professed Anglophobes is not due to "Boeritis," but to Anglophobia, which is no product of the Transvaal war, but is the result of accumulated rancour dating from the Vienna Congress. . . . The Press did not create the feeling. The feeling has been there, accumulating for decades. So forcible an outburst was possible, because the nation was ripe for an anti-English outburst. Things will resume their normal course, but the public have seen their strength and are fully aware of it. Should the German Government ever desire to make use of it, the nation will respond as one man.

Saunders's view could not have been better put. A fairer estimate of the correspondent than that of Professor Fay, or Professor Hale, comes from Professor Malcolm Carroll (Germany and the Great Powers, pp. 440-1):

However biased Saunders may have been, Germany's own leaders admitted his substantial accuracy. The Emperor did not hesitate to speak to Queen Victoria of the hatred which the German people felt for England, attributing it to the "poison which Bismarck poured into the ears of the people". Bülow was even more forthright: "It is doubtless true that, in general, English sentiment is much less anti-German than German sentiment is anti-English. Those Englishmen are therefore the most dangerous who, like Chirol and Saunders, know from their own observation the acuteness and depth of the German antipathy to England. If the English public were fully aware of the dominant sentiment in Germany a great change would occur in its views in regard to Anglo-German relations."

Bülow wrote the passage regarding Chirol and Saunders on November 24, 1899, i.e., when Saunders had been The Times O.O.C. in Berlin for nearly two years. It is discussed in the text, supra, p. 308. Professor Hale (p. 207) quotes the passage, but without drawing attention to its point, i.e., that Chirol and Saunders were dangerous, not for the reason that they misrepresented Germany, as the German writers of doctoral theses, and Professor Hale suggest, but because they "know from personal observation the acuteness and depth of Germany's unfortunate antipathy to England". The writers of doctoral theses (cf. the list at pp. 801 supra and 819 infra) are doubtless of minor significance but, as Germans, they need not be blamed for the patriotic standpoint. It is a little surprising, however, that eminent American professors of history should have accepted their judgment upon The Times.

It may be pointed out to Professor Fay, and to Professor Hale, that criticism of the Press depends, for any scientific value it may have, upon one vital requirement: knowledge of the intentions behind the policy of newspapers. Even as far as German study of the subject is concerned, much has been done since Martin Spahn read his stimulating paper on "The Press as a Source of Modern History and its Present Use" to the International Congress for Historical Science at Berlin in 1908, i.e., after the appearance of most of the dissertations relied upon by those who adversely criticise The Times. Professor Hale's bibliography, which is very full, does not include Hans A. Münster: "Die Zeitung als Quelle der historischen Forschung" in the Berliner Monatshefte (Berlin, June, 1937) which contains a number of cautelae worth remembering by those who propose to themselves the task of criticising The Times. The writer, though writing after 1933, conserves a measure of the old German scientific spirit. The historian has to decide, Münster says, the value to him of the newspaper as a source. This is a matter of research; very technical research, too. "Only when the research worker has prepared the ground, can the historian approach it successfully; only when it has been made clear, in each case, under what conditions the newspaper has been produced, can he use this paper as a source; for only then can one know the intentions behind the paper's judgments and its presentation of news." Münster's concluding paragraph is unexceptionable. Newspapers can only be used as an historical source when one has in each case examined and weighed the various influences on the production of the paper. Only then can one clearly picture, in Droysen's words "the relationship of the given material towards the events to which it bears witness". It remains to add that these influences cannot be scientifically weighed without reference to the correspondence between the proprietorial, managing and executive departments of the newspaper with its agents at home and abroad.

This correspondence, in the instance of *The Times*, would have been placed at the disposal of Professor Hale had he chosen to visit Printing House Square equally with the Berlin Institut für Zeitungswissenschaft, and the Munich Institut für Zeitungskunde.

# XII. THE END OF BRITISH ISOLATION

Bernstorff, Count J.: Memoirs. (London, 1936.)

The author was appointed by Bülow a member of the Embassy staff in London (1902-1906) responsible for Press relations in succession to Eckardstein. He mentions (p. 55)

Valentine Chirol, a constant contributor to *The Times* with whom I was on very good terms in London but who later on honoured me with his hostility, as will appear from the incident in Aberystwyth which I shall mention later on. But even then he was suspicious, as he had been *The Times* Correspondent in Berlin where he had fallen out with Holstein.

The incident is described at p. 226, where he says that

When I went to England to the Aberystwyth conference, Lord Tyrrell protested strongly against my presence. He actually arranged with my former friend Valentine Chirol to write a violent article against me in *The Times*.

There are three letters from Chirol at pp. 65-8.

Chirol, Valentine: "The origins of the Present War" in the Quarterly Review, London, October, 1914, pp. 415-449.

"A Chapter of Anglo-German 'Secret Diplomacy'": Unsigned review of Eckardstein's *Erinnerungen* in *The Times Literary Supplement*, September 9, 1920. Signed articles in *The Times*, September 11, 13, 1920.

"The Boer War and the International Situation, 1899-1902" in the Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, III, 1860-1919. (Cambridge, 1923, pp. 263-293.)

"On the Road to Armageddon," Chapter XXI, pp. 284-303, in Fifty Years in a Changing World. (London, 1927.)

The above have an important bearing on the question of Chirol's visit to Berlin and his connexion with the negotiations which collapsed at the end of 1901. The account in Chapter XII of the part Chirol played during the negotiations incorporates his published material so far as it can be checked by reference to the unpublished papers in P.H.S. and the published papers from official archives. The material published by Chirol consists of articles in (1) The Quarterly Review (October, 1914); (2) The Times (September 11-13, 1920); (3) The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy (1923); (4) in Fifty Years in a Changing World (1927). The published archives contain (5) the report written by Chirol of a conversation with Holstein which took place in Berlin on October 19, 1908. (G. and T. VII.) The historical importance of the collapse at the end of 1901 of the last negotiations undertaken by Britain and Germany with a view to an "alliance" requires that the attitude of The Times and the action of Chirol at the critical moment be set out in some detail. What follows supplements the account given in Chapter XII.

It needs to be borne in mind that the events here described occurred seven, 11, 19, 22 and 26 years before publication by Chirol; and, secondly, that in 1927, when he published his last and fullest account of these incidents, he was 75 years of age. Comparison of these five narratives reveals that they are mainly drawn, not from documents, but from memory, *i.e.*, of personal experiences and interviews. Comparison further suggests that as the interval between the date of publication of Chirol's accounts of the incidents increases to over 20 years, and the extent of his knowledge widens as the result of the publication of Eckardstein's memoirs, the emphasis upon the significance of his personal contribution to the negotiations strengthens. The incontrovertible facts are that in October Chirol was in Berlin, that he was duly invited to the Wilhelmstrasse and that he interviewed Holstein on two occasions and, finally, had a talk with Bülow. Controversy is unavoidable when the accounts of Chirol's proceedings are collated and prove to agree neither with themselves, nor with other contemporary documents.

The Quarterly article (cited below as Q.R.) appeared in 1914 promptly after war had broken out. Chirol, at page 426, writes in dramatic fashion that he

was not, he thought, guilty of any indiscretion in lifting a corner of the veil from the hitherto secret chapter of Anglo-German relations, now that the war has relieved me from any obligations towards my German informants. For I owe primarily my knowledge of what passed to the then German Chancellor, Prince Bülow, and to the German Foreign Office. . . . Baron von Holstein wrote to me suggesting that I should pay a visit to Berlin, in the course of which he hoped to remove some of the misconceptions under which *The Times* evidently laboured as to Germany's attitude towards England.

Thus the ultimate responsibility for bringing Chirol to Berlin lay with the Emperor for When the determination with which England prosecuted the [South African] war, in spite of many reverses and disappointments, had given fresh proof of the resources and vitality of the British Empire, and his own diplomatic intrigues to mobilize

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other Powers against us had failed, he suddenly boxed the compass and made a bolder bid than he had ever done before for a definite rapprochement between the two countries—indeed, for much more than a rapprochement.

The purpose of Chirol's visit was thus directly related to the Emperor's bold "bid," which was not made, in the first instance, as a direct offer. Chirol's statement is categorical as to the date and method of the "bid": "In October, 1901, informal conversations were initiated for a treaty of alliance." (Q.R., p. 426) As to the exact date of Chirol's visit, he tells us (Q.R., p. 428) that "Mr. Chamberlain had delivered on the day after I reached Berlin his [Edinburgh] speech". Chirol's date of arrival in Berlin, it is to be inferred from this, was October 24th.

There are numerous minor contradictions between the earlier and the later versions of what followed his arrival in Berlin on October 24 (Q.R.) or October 27 (Fifty Years, p. 288) and the purport of his meeting with Prince Bülow and Baron Holstein, the latter of whom had written "to me suggesting that I should pay a visit to Berlin, in the course of which he hoped to remove some of the misconceptions under which The Times evidently laboured as to Germany's attitude towards England" (Q.R., p. 427) or who invited me at Prince Bülow's request to pay a short visit to Berlin and "talk over with the Imperial Chancellor the whole question of Anglo-German relations". (F.Y., p. 288.)

Comparison of the reports of the talks by Holstein (see pp. 324-332, supra) and by Chirol shows numerous divergences. Holstein's account, which incidentally suggests that he did nearly all the talking, devotes most space to Eastern and Russian affairs, criticizing Lord Salisbury first for his plan for the partition of Turkey, and proceeding to the Middle East, doing the same with Curzon over Koweit. Holstein then turned to China and criticized Salisbury's interpretation of the Manchuria agreement. The hypothesis of an Anglo-Russian agreement was mentioned in relation to the East. It was only half-way through the interview that the relations of Russia to the Triple Alliance and European affairs were mentioned. The Straits question as a permanent factor separating the interests of France and Russia was noticed. If such topics naturally brought up the matter of Anglo-German relations they were treated only to a tithe of the space devoted to Eastern affairs. As to the question of an Anglo-German "alliance," Holstein repeated what had already been said before, i.e., that in the existing circumstances Germany had no reason for frantically looking round for support, although he himself was one of those who believed that the two great commonwealths of Germany and England would be drawn together by the current of the times, but perhaps when he had gone. He followed with a reference to the suggestions made by other Powers with a view to securing Germany's "good offices" in a plan to intervene in the South African war. Chirol's answer was that he did not know that the idea of "good offices" had taken such a concrete shape, "but as you say so I believe it". Holstein's memorandum mentions that he read two documents to Chirol, both concerning the Cowes interview of 1895 regarding the partition of Turkey; upon which matter Chirol in Q.R. at p. 427, says:

During my ten days' stay in the German capital, I spent many hours in the Wilhelmstrasse studying diplomatic documents, put before me as "extremely confidential," of which I need say no more than that I am now satisfied they had

been deliberately and grossly garbled for my better edification.

These "garbled" documents will be considered later. It is only now important to note that Holstein says he had a file handy and read out two documents to Chirol-The last sentence of Holstein's first memorandum reads: "Er wird vor seiner Abreise nochmal herankommen" ("He proposes to call before he leaves"), which may be taken as an indication that no time or programme had been fixed for a second meeting. It thus seems possible that on October 31 Holstein had told Chirol everything he wanted to tell him. The inference is that the conversation with Bülow had not been mooted on that day, and that if it had been, a formal farewell only had been intended. In all probability it was the excitement in Germany over the publication in the French papers of the correspondence of Voyron, the French commander in China, with Waldersee, which Holstein saw on the following day, that led him to regard Chirol's second call as possibly possessing advantages that would justify drawing up a detailed programme for it and then probably to arrange that Bülow should see Chirol. The Voyron-Waldersee incident, with which Holstein began his second talk with Chirol (on November 1 or 2), again raised the Far Eastern question; this time a complication in which France was the chief obstacle. The general references in Holstein's second memorandum (i.e., for November 1) to an Anglo-German "alliance" may well be read as having been prepared against a mention of the subject by Chirol; but, in any case, it is impossible to read into them any sort of "offer" by Holstein of an "alliance" or any sponsorship of, or initiation of, negotiations, pourparlers, or anything of the kind. Characteristically, the paragraphs dealing with England begin and end with an attack upon Salisbury. It is curious that Chirol makes no reference in F.Y. to the second interview in which Holstein, with Bülow's previous approval, only mentioned the idea of a German-English alliance "with an appearance of unconcern" (see p. 330, supra).

Billow's annotations to Holstein's memorandum of November 1 offer strong contrast to Chirol's statement in Q.R. (426) that "the wooing throughout was entirely

on their side". On the contrary, Bülow and Holstein, whatever their points of difference. were agreed that no serious talk of an "alliance" was then to be proceeded with. It cannot be doubted that this point at least was made in the interview with Chirol exactly as indicated beforehand by Holstein to Bülow. Nevertheless, as if Holstein had completely failed to make his point, Chirol says in *The Times* (September 11, 1920) that a few months after the failure of the last Anglo-German pourparlers for an alliance in which Baron von Eckardstein played an official part, another and final attempt was made in October, 1901, to resume the conversations between London and Berlin" It is improbable that a man like Holstein would have taken the risk of speaking to Chirol in a sense contrary to that approved by Bülow and certainly impossible that he would have spoken in a sense contrary to the policy for which he bore so large a measure of responsibility. It is the more noteworthy, therefore, that Chirol's view of the purpose of his invitation as expressed in *The Times* articles "to come and talk over with the Imperial Chancellor the whole question of Anglo-German relations" is completed in F.Y. (p. 288) with the statement that they were "to be placed, he [the Imperial Chancellor] hoped, on a sound and permanent footing of amity in accordance with the highest interests of both countries". Chirol undoubtedly believed that pourparlers were ripe to pass from the unofficial to the official stage (F, Y), p. 288) and that the initiative was determined upon by the Germans in October. By 1920 he had not given up this idea. It would seem, therefore, that irrespective of the accidental character of the lunch at the Embassy with Rosen, the meetings to which it led acquired in Chirol's mind the character of a step in negotiations, in which he played or was going to play some part, regarding an "alliance".

The definition of the purpose of the talks is expressed otherwise in Chirol's article on "The International Situation, 1899-1902" (in the Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, Cambridge, 1923, III, 285). Here Chirol had been "privately invited by the German Foreign Office to Berlin for the whole question of Anglo-German relations in view of the proposed alliance". The visit thus assumes, on the German side, an official character. The Chancellor, Chirol here proceeds, "was chiefly concerned to establish in an exhaustive review of Anglo-German relations a large credit balance for Germany and to prove, in particular, the German case in regard to Manchuria". The Chancellor in the course of his remarks "professed to deplore the violent anti-British feeling, of which he did not deny the existence, in Germany, and ended with an emphatic assurance that, so long as he was Chancellor he would not allow it to deflect him by a hair's breadth from his policy of unswerving friendship towards Great Britain". In this account Holstein s not mentioned; it is the Imperial Chancellor who discusses the whole question of Anglo-German relations in view of the proposed alliance. It is possible that the second visit of Chirol to Holstein, as arranged, did not take place (it is not mentioned in F.Y.) and that Bülow saw him instead. If this were the case doubtless the course of the discussion, so far as it related to the idea of an alliance, would have followed the lines of Bülow's annotations to Holstein's memorandum.

The termination of the interview with Bülow is described by Chirol in *The Times* (followed by F.Y., p. 296) with great feeling. The Imperial Chancellor himself spoke solemnly in favour of Anglo-German friendship. Bülow asked Chirol to use his influence with *The Times* 

to bring Anglo-German relations back to the old footing of mutual confidence and intimacy for which his great predecessor, Prince Bismarck, had always striven, though the British Government and British public opinion had not then been yet ripe for an actual Alliance. No one could rate higher than he did the influence of the British Press, which, he regretted to say, had no real counterpart in Germany. I ventured to repeat that, whatever the merits or demerits of the German Press. I had lived too long in Berlin not to know how dependent it was on official inspiration, and that I should therefore look for some echo in its columns of the friendly sentiments and hopes which he had been good enough to express. Leaning forward then towards me, and taking my hand in his, he gave me with the utmost earnestness an assurance which I recorded, I think, almost textually after I left him. "Believe me, and I give you my word of honour, as I sit in this chair as the Chancellor of the German Empire, not only shall I never countenance the hostile attacks upon your country of which, I know, a large-too large-section of the German Press is often guilty, but I shall never allow, as in the past I have never allowed, the anti-British sentiments of an ignorant public to deflect me by so much as a hair's breadth from the policy of true friendliness towards England, which lies nearest my heart."

Chirol nowhere tells us exactly when or how he received Holstein's invitation. In F.Y. at a passage at p. 296 (i.e., eight pages further on in the story) he incidentally reveals that "the day before I started for Berlin Mr. Chamberlain had delivered a speech at Edinburgh". In this case he would have left London on the 26th and arrived in Berlin during the course of the next 24 hours, i.e., the 27th and not the 24th as stated in Q.R. The narrative in F.Y. proceeds at p. 288 to say that "the invitation took me by surprise, as I did not imagine myself to be in very good odour in the Wilhelmstrasse. But that was no reason for declining it". He consistently asserts that the purpose of the invitation was to entice him into supporting the German endeavour to secure an "alliance"

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with Britain. What Chirol said when Holstein strove to make plain to him that in the official view the idea of a German-English alliance was "a seed that must ripen gradually," is nowhere recorded.

Chirol's conversation with Bülow, which lasted "over two hours" (Q.R., p. 427) or "over an hour" (T.T. and F.Y., p. 295), was, apparently, no formal farewell, but was concerned with the "whole question of Anglo-German relations". (Q.R., T.T. and F.Y.) According to C.H., it was concerned principally with the justification of Germany's case regarding Manchuria. This account sounds, by far, the most probable of all those given by Chirol at various times. In the account in Q.R., &c., another matter raised was the Cowes interview. Holstein's record, it has been seen, begins with some general discussion regarding the relations between the two nations, with Chirol pointing out the animosity to Britain shown by the Press and public life of Germany. Holstein then pleaded guilty to a feeling of distrust and prepared to justify it from examples of British action towards Germany, such as the Cowes interview; and "as I had already got out the documents," Holstein says, he read out parts of Hatzfeldt's report and the warning sent to Kiderlen. It is a probable inference from Holstein's words that other documents were communicated to Chirol from the same file. In his own account in Q.R. he "spent many hours in the Wilhelmstrasse studying diplomatic documents, put before me as 'extremely confidential". He there says that "I am now satisfied that they had been deliberately and grossly garbled for my better edification". At the time, according to Holstein (see p. 325), Chirol said "This is a serious affair. Hitherto one was used to believe a Prime Minister's word. In F.Y. the account follows the narrative in The Times and Chirol's reading of the documents did not impress him deeply. Pieces concerned with the Far East which were made available to him, and intended (says F.Y., p. 291) to acquit Germany of bad faith in regard to China, he never accepted. "As I had been out in the Far East at the time and had had first-hand information even from German sources on the subject. the documents made even less impression upon me than the Emperor's record of the Cowes conversation.

Whether the papers that he either listened to (Holstein), or read (Chirol), made a "very great" impression (Q.R.), or very little (F.Y.), it need not be doubted that the Cowes subject came up in the conversation with Bülow. In referring these documents to the readers of The Times Chirol says that the German mention of the Cowes incident was, in his eyes, highly deliberate. Already Holstein—whether during, or as a pendant to, his conversation with Chirol on October 31, had read aloud to him, or had allowed him to read, either by itself or with others the records do not agree—had drawn Chirol's special attention to the "Emperor's record" (the description is Chirol's). He had, it has been seen, already decided (in Q.R.) that the documents shown him had been "deliberately and grossly garbled for his better edification". In The Times of September 11, 1920, Chirol thus amplifies this statement:

From the curiosity which Prince Bülow afterwards [i.e. since Chirol's interview with Marschall in 1896] betrayed to me on this point, I have been sometimes inclined to believe in the light of later events that the copy of the Emperor's record of the conversation placed before me had been doctored for my benefit by the German Foreign Office on the lines of the notorious Ems telegram; but on the whole it seems to me more probable that the record itself was as audacious a perversion of the truth as to what passed between him and Lord Salisbury as were the statements which he had made when he assured Sir Frank Lascelles that he had repelled French and Russian approaches for intervention in South Africa, whereas it was Paris and St. Petersburg that had repelled his overtures and again when he secured the recognition of Field Marshal von Waldersee as Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces in China after the Boxer troubles by assuring simultaneously each Power in the strictest confidence that he had already got the consent of all the other Powers concerned.

Chirol's efforts and those of Gooch and Temperley failed to bring to light in the Foreign Office any memorandum by Lord Salisbury recording his conversation with the Emperor; the editors of Die Grosse Politik have discovered no "Emperor's record" in Berlin. That it existed in the form described by Chirol is doubted by Preller and Langer and dismissed in R. J. Sontag, "The Cowes Interview," in Political Science Quarterly, XL, pp. 217-247 (1925). Sontag thinks (p. 229) Chirol was probably shown Hatzfeldt's dispatch, the details of the Cowes interview being supplied by Holstein, which is what Holstein's memorandum says.

Chirol's assumption that the documents put before him were recognizably faked or "garbled" (Q.R.) or, as he later said, originally perverted (T.T.) would, if deliberate, show a degree of clumsiness on the part of two such subtle minds as Holstein and Bülow which it is difficult to credit. The fault of these men is that they were too clever rather than too clumsy. If it be assumed that they conspired to show to Chirol and not to read to him a number of documents, they surely could be relied upon to remember that it would be of little use to give such a man "garbled" confidential documents about relations with his own country; since it would not take a man with his connexions long to find out the truth. It is more likely that Chirol's memory failed him. He came into contact with the documents in 1901, but it is not until 1914 (Q.R., p. 427) that he published

the statement that he is "now satisfied that they had been deliberately garbled for my better edification". Six years later he abandoned the charge of forgery against Holstein and continued to call him his friend. In 1926-1927 he thus protests (F.Y., p. 301) his respect for him:

His enemies even now do not spare his memory, but I shall always have a more friendly recollection and a greater regard for him than for anyone else I have known amongst the men who must share with him, and in an even higher degree, the responsibility for the "new course" that followed William II's dismissal of the "old pilot".

Whether or not the "Emperor's record" which Chirol claims to have studied and noted existed in the form he describes, the importance of the Cowes incident is not lessened, but it remains a matter for the greater regret that Lord Salisbury made no note of the conversation with the Emperor and "the notes" which Chirol says he made after his inspection of the document have not been preserved. It would not appear that the accounts he published after 1914 were based upon them. Chirol himself felt the need of a British answer to Holstein. In The Times and F.Y. (p. 291) Chirol recalls Marschall's statement to him in 1896 as of sufficient importance to justify his bringing it to the notice of Lord Salisbury. Sir Ian Malcolm, then his assistant private secretary, told him that Salisbury only said that the story showed "the expediency of having a third person present when talking to the Emperor, if he made it his practice to put into his interlocutor's mouth proposals which emanated from himself". (F.Y., p. 291.)

When Prince Bülow received Chirol "after my perusal of the documents which he had selected to place at my disposal," he started by impressing upon him the fact that the proposals made by Lord Salisbury had never ceased to rankle. They might "still prove a serious obstacle to his Majesty's cordial acceptance of the idea of a close alliance between Germany and England, though German and British statesmen were now happily at one in recognizing its value for both countries". The Kaiser considered himself tied by the bonds of personal friendship to the Sultan and the effect upon his mind of Salisbury's proposals for dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire might be guessed. Chirol's argument that a truer interpretation of Salisbury's language might well be that it was inspired by a righteous indignation at Turkish misrule and a sincere conviction that Turkey could not, and was not fit to, survive under such conditions, elicited from Bülow the question whether Chirol was in possession of any account that Lord Salisbury might have given of the interview and what account was current in well-informed circles in England. "I was not in a position to gratify his suspicious curiosity, even if I had wished to." F.Y. adds (p. 294) that Chirol "was driven to remind him that his own speeches in the Reichstag had not been a very fortunate response to Mr. Chamberlain's first overtures, but he passed this off by remarking that had Mr. Chamberlain been a diplomatist he would not have blurted the matter out so crudely and placed him, the Chancellor, in such an embarrassing position. 'But this time' he said, 'we have all been very discreet, and I know that you also can be extremely discreet'. So he was going to outline to me the general terms of a defensive alliance as he conceived it." The rest of the passage, referring to the Far East and its exclusion from the scope of the proposed Anglo-German "alliance," closely parallels that in T.T. The statement made by Bulow that he would not countenance attacks on Britain or allow them to deflect him from the policy of true friendliness towards England "which lies nearest my heart" made upon Chirol a far deeper impression than the Chancellor may have intended or that would have been felt by the average Englishman. The assurance was, in fact, received by the sensitive Chirol as a personal promise to himself never to allow the Press Bureau to disseminate anti-British propaganda; it was a solemn undertaking upon which Bülow went back when it suited him. That is the charge that Chirol made in 1908 (G. and T. VII) and repeated steadily until 1927. The reason Chirol assigns for Bülow's "volte-face" was that the German-initiated negotiations collapsed immediately after he had left Berlin ("no sooner had I returned to London" he says in Q.R. and F.Y.). Chamberlain's speech of October 25 which "had been reproduced with extraordinarily few comments in the German Press whilst I was in Berlin" had been "dug out again by the German Press, semi-official as well as unofficial". That was the proof. The alliance had been refused and Bülow forthwith turned on the hate against Britain.

Chirol's first published account (in Q.R.) makes no mention of the series of telegrams quoted in chapter XI, but "I wrote to Baron Holstein, asking him how I was to reconcile with the above assurance from the Chancellor himself the outbreak of this fresh campaign of Anglophobia; which was clearly inspired by the Foreign Office Press Bureau". Upon this, Holstein telegraphed an answer the original of which has not survived: it had, says Chirol, "at least the merit of frankness: Wir haben einen Korb bekommen und wir danken dafur," which in German slang means: "Our offer of marriage has been rejected and we are conveying our thanks." Chirol adds (Q.R., p. 428) that, "It was on the day I left Berlin [this would have been Nov. 4] that the British Government had dropped the conversations about the proposed treaty of alliance". As has been seen at pp. 345-6, supra, the British Government did not make their decision to drop the negotiations until December 19 in London and December 28 in Berlin.

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According, however, to Chirol in 1914 and in 1927, Lascelles announced Lansdowne's refusal of the German terms to Bülow on November 4 or 5 at latest, *i.e.*, the day or the day after, he left Berlin. It was only in October, 1927, when Chirol published F.Y. that there came out, simultaneously, the second volume of British Documents edited by Gooch and Temperley. Had this volume been before Chirol when he was writing F.Y. he would have seen not only the correspondence between Lansdowne and Lascelles, but the latter's report to his chief that he had found on December 28 that Metternich had not, by then, reported Lansdowne's conversation with him on the 19th declining an "alliance" upon the German terms. Lascelles therefore announced the British refusal on that day, *i.e.*, December 28. Chirolwould also have seen reproduced in G. and T. (II, p. 84) the letter which Holstein wrote to him on January 3, 1902, protesting against Lansdowne's "Absage" which he had heard of only "about a week ago". Thus Lascelles and Metternich reported Lansdowne's refusal of an "alliance" on December 28; and not on November 4 or 5 as Chirol says.

As Chirol remained under the impression that Lansdowne's refusal was known to the Germans at the beginning of November instead of at the end of December, it is to be doubted whether, either in 1901 or since, and in spite of his correspondence with Holstein and conversation with Sanderson in January, 1902, he had acquired more than a fragmentary knowledge of the negotiations as a whole. That, in the period of his activity as a publicist, he was ever in a position to understand correctly the sequence of the conversations as a whole it is impossible to believe. It is revealed in part only by the documents that have been published since the publication of F.Y., in G. and T., and in J. L. Garvin, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain. In any case, little talk of the conversations, highly secret as they were, could have reached Chirol in the Far East. His return on June 28 did not coincide with the sounding of "warning notes" regarding Germany as is suggested in Q.R. and T.T. The series of special articles from his pen which began on January 29, 1901, only concluded on May 28; and the article of July 13, the first after his return to London, discussed the relations of Russia and Bulgaria.

There are several points to be observed in this connexion. First, Chirol dined with Bell at 98, Portland Place on November 6, which, if he followed custom, was the day of his arrival in London. He would not, therefore, have left Berlin before November 4 or 5. He wrote no official letter until November 8, to Blowitz. On November 12 he wrote to Steed excusing his silence on the ground that he had been "for a week in Berlin," i.e., not "ten days" as in Q.R., p. 426. According to Q.R., "The report of Mr. Chamberlain's speech reached Berlin whilst I was there, and was in the possession of Prince Bülow when I saw him. But not a single reference was made to it either by the German Chancellor or other German officials with whom I was in constant contact; and only a few newspapers, which were described [Chirol does not say by whom] to me as 'quite irresponsible,' denounced it with the customary furor teutonicus". Forgetful of the fact that official silence on the speech, in conversation with him, need not necessarily be inconsistent with an officially "correct" attitude, Chirol proceeds to say that "Suddenly, just as I got back to London the whole semi-official Press began to give tongue. A belated hue and cry had been raised against Mr. Chamberlain's insolence, etc.". (Q.R., p. 428.)

Chirol, apparently, did not see what Saunders saw and reported from Berlin on November 1: that the agitation was already great and that it was one more consequence of the pro-Boer attitude long stimulated by atrocity stories swallowed by Germans. Secondly, Chirol affirms in F.Y. that the digging up by the Foreign Office Press Bureau of the Chamberlain speech was a pretext for an anti-English campaign, as was revealed to him in a "short message" from Holstein: "Wir haben einen Korb bekommen," &c. This piece of jocosity signified to Chirol "that Germany was replying in her own way to the rejection from Downing Street, on the very day I left Berlin, of an alliance on the basis proposed by the Chancellor, and that she would have none on any other terms". (F.Y., p. 297; Q.R., p. 429.) When seven years afterwards he had two hours with Holstein in Berlin (see G. and T. VI, pp. 158-161), no mention, we may be sure from the context, was made of the Korb message. It is curious that the text of this "short message" was not copied with the rest of the series with the letter-book 4 where they appear, undated, but placed in series order between November 17 and December 9, 1901.

Chirol's resentment was reserved for Bülow. To him he had felt a profound dislike ever since 1901 when he last saw him. In discussing naval policy with Holstein in 1908, the assurance that Bülow would use his influence against any further expansion was enough to excite Chirol's suspicion.

I told him it was difficult for me to place much confidence in Prince Bülow when, within a week of the emphatic assurances he had been good enough to volunteer to me when I was last in Berlin (November, 1901), he had started or sanctioned a fresh campaign of unparalleled violence against us under pretext of a speech from Mr. Chamberlain, which had been delivered ten days before my conversation with him (the Chancellor)—a campaign which had culminated in Prince Bülow's provocative speech in the Reichstag about the "rocher de bronze". (Chirol, October 19, 1908, in G. and T. VI, p. 160.)

According to Chirol, Holstein said he had himself regretted that campaign at the time, and had advised the Chancellor to speak in a very different sense:

The Chancellor loved a phrase, and that phrase had unfortunately been suggested to him by his evil genius. He hesitated at first when I asked him who that evil genius might be; but he ultimately named Herr von Hammann, in the Foreign Office (who was then head of the Press Bureau).

Regarding the "alliance," it is doubtful whether Chirol, who commits himself to the statement in Q.R. (p. 415) that "the wooing was entirely on the German side" was aware of the evolution, during the preceding three years, of Chamberlain's views on international relations, which had followed his realization that the state of affairs in the Far East had made "splendid isolation" an impossible policy for the future. Although no move was made at the time owing to the German seizure of Kiau Chow, and other incidents. a dinner at Alfred Rothschild's in March, 1898, was taken as the opportunity to arrange a meeting between the Colonial Secretary and Eckardstein's chief, Hatzfeldt. On March 29, Chamberlain and Hatzfeldt met and had a private conversation during which, "in the course of questions and answers, the following suggestions were evolved: That an alliance might be established by Treaty or Agreement between Germany and Great Britain for a term of years; that it should be of a defensive character based upon mutual understanding as to policy in China and elsewhere". (Garvin, III, p. 260.) Hatzfeldt's memorandum adds the significant detail that "in the whole conversation Chamberlain's words were calm and definite, and he made clear with great frankness his wish for a binding agreement between England and the Triple Alliance. He repeated several times that no time was to be lost, as a decision here must be taken pretty soon". (Garvin. III, p. 201.) It is only reasonable, therefore, to take April 25, 1898, as the date of the initiation of the talks. Chamberlain then told Hatzfeldt that his idea was that Germany herself, not Austria and Italy, was the "natural ally" for Britain. He warned Hatzfeldt that if this idea of "a natural alliance with Germany must be renounced. it would be no impossibility for England to arrive at an understanding with Russia and with France". (Garvin, III, p. 275.) The "Either-or" of Chamberlain's position was not missed by the Ambassador. His report made plain to the Wilhelmstrasse that he "could have no doubt that in case of a definite rejection on our side, England, so far as he has to do with it, will work for an understanding with Russia or France, and that if no political understanding can be reached with us, we must cease here to expect any concession in colonial matters from him". When Germany showed herself too sceptical or cautious to make any such "natural" alliance, Chamberlain at once said, "there was now nothing more to be done," and his final word at that meeting was that "it was for the Emperor to make the next move". That invitation ranks either as the end of negotiations if none followed, or as the end of the first stage if they were continued.

But within a few days Chamberlain was sought out by Hatzfeldt and welcomed to another conversation. The discussions again concerned the alliance and again lapsed. They were again resumed in September, 1899, after the Samoa dispute, when Eckardstein again revived them. With interruptions they were continued throughout 1900 and 1901. The interruptions affect not the matter of the discussions but their progress. The matter, like the personalities, remained the same—and by 1901 the matter advanced to the official stage of pourparlers and the Foreign Secretary officially took part in them. In consequence the conclusion cannot be avoided that the talks originated in 1898 and that Chirol's statement that "In October, 1901, informal conversations were initiated in Berlin for a treaty of alliance" is unhistorical. Finally, the "notes of warning" against Germany which appeared in The Times, so far as they were not of an obviously general character, derived from the paper's settled policy to maintain friendly relations with Germany without entering into an "alliance". The strongest "notes of warning" in 1901 were printed in the early part of the year in connexion with the Kaiser's visit, On January 29 the paper said that "the great mass of the public views with distrust his Majesty's declared anglophil views". On February 6, while felicitating both countries upon the visit, The Times laid emphasis upon the fact that it should not prejudice our relations with other great nations. These "warnings" appeared, it should be remembered. before Chirol's return from the Far East.

The careful survey of Johannes Dreyer, England und Deutschland in ihrer Politik und Presse im Jahre 1901 (Berlin, 1934), which seeks (p. 62) incidentally to verify Chirol's statement regarding the warning, traces only two references which may be viewed as "notes of warning". These are to be found, in Dreyer's opinion, in the leading articles of March 3 and June 15, whereas Chirol returned from the Far East on June 28. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that Chirol's memory in 1908 and later served him badly.

Chirol's reliance at the age of 75 upon a memory that had never been conspicuously accurate as to detail is regrettable; but he is not to be reproached for missing the opportunity of refreshing it by reference to Gooch and Temperley. Die Grosse Politik, however, had been in course of publication for some years and certain specialist works occasioned by its issue had been published before 1927, and these he does ignore. Among those

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which touch upon Chirol's visit, and the reasons for it, is Eugen Fischer, Holstein's Grosses Nein, published in 1925:

It was like the explosion of a bombshell when, on October 29 [1901], the monthly National Review, strongly supported by The Times, asked for a radical change in British policy. Metternich reported (from London; the telegram is not in Die Grosse Politik) that an article of the National Review, entitled "British Foreign Policy" claimed Germany to be the most dangerous enemy of England and recommended a firm entente with Russia in order to avert the German danger. A leading article in The Times, published on the day of the report, "is in entire agreement with the statements of the National Review and also recommends, as it had become evident that Germany could not be relied upon, the most far-reaching agreement possible between England and Russia and common action of England, Russia and Japan in China". The ambassador adds: "Political circles here are inclined to consider the statements of the National Review and The Times as inspired by some members of the Cabinet, and see in them important signs of a radical change in the whole British foreign policy. I have not yet been able to ascertain whether and how far the assumption of an inspiration is correct. I may refer, in that regard, to telegram No. 51 of the Embassy, dated January 18, concerning statements of Chamberlain, which is more or less identical with the contents of the article of The Times."1

It was on account of the Russian attempts to win Berlin over to a policy of "freundschaftlichen Ratschlägen" for the ending of the war that, in Fischer's view, led to Chirol's visit, since:

The Petersburg-Berlin secrets appeared to London sufficiently interesting to send a thorough expert, *The Times* Ambassador—it would be too disrespectful to call this journalist-diplomat a correspondent—Sir Valentine Chirol, to Berlin. Holstein, who had not had relations with Chirol for a long time, received him on October 31, "complying with orders received". Although Chirol's visit to Berlin was, without doubt, caused in the first place by the danger of intervention, it can be qualified "simultaneously as the *last English feeler* for an alliance; only it was really a mere feeler".

The foundation for Fischer's hypothesis is slender. The article appeared on October 29. It is true that its substance could have been telegraphed to Berlin on Tuesday and Chirol invited by wire during the course of the day but the letter-books at Printing House Square prove that he wrote nothing between October 22 and November 8. Whether he was in Berlin a week, as he told Steed in November, 1901, or "ten days," as he told readers of Q.R. in October, 1914, he had certainly left London before the "Russian" article appeared. It is not certain, however, that he either saw the proof or even knew that Buckle had commissioned E. D. J. Wilson to write it. Chirol was not pro-Russian in 1901 and Buckle was wont to go his own way from time to time. There is no evidence that the leader of October 29 expresses Chirol's ideas. Moreover, the Germans did not mention the article directly or indirectly to Chirol. The notice they took of it at the time of its appearance hardly justifies the use of the term "bombshell".

Here, also, Saunders is the better authority. On October 31 he sent The Times an account of the Press reactions to the article. The National-Zeitung thought Anglo-Russian rapprochement far distant and doubted if the idea of it would be acceptable in British authoritative circles. It proceeded to attack The Times for "having the ambition to thwart the official policy of the British Government by rancorous polemics". This was an ambition that was "at least for the present bound to remain unsatisfied, since the relations between the German and British Governments are notoriously of the best, and since it is not to be anticipated that the somewhat clumsy conceptions and invectives of The Times will produce any alteration in that regard". Saunders counter-suggested that an understanding, "achieved without German intervention" (a favourite caution of Saunders's), between Britain and Russia would be helpful and that Germans should welcome the prospect as, if it were achieved, they need no longer fear that Britain's policy was to use Germany as a cat's-paw against her eastern neighbour. Britain's cultivation of good relations with Russia, in the minds of the increasing number of Englishmen who desired it, was justified on the mere ground that "like Germany herself, they would prefer to have another string to their bow". The Vossische Zeitung's complaint that German Anglophobia and the "excesses" of the pan-Germans were regarded by Englishmen as having the approval and protection of the German Government was admitted; but Saunders added "I know that, for the best of reasons, at the present juncture, the German Government deprecates those polemics. As a matter of fact it is not in the interest of Germany to see the desires of the pan-Germans achieved in the present circumstances of the international situation." His message concluded with a reiteration of the resentment felt by Britain against the daily attacks upon the British Sovereign, the Government and the Army. If they, or anything like them, had been published in England a diplomatic

1 Pp. 279-280. Fischer was a member of the Reichstag Committee for Research into the origins of the war. For an examination of the book see the two articles by the Berlin Correspondent of *The Times*, April 21 and 23, 1925.

protest would follow within a week. In such circumstances the suggestion that Britain and the Czar might, if so inclined, meet halfway was opportune. This virtually ended the discussion of the "Russian" article.

Fischer's hypothesis, i.e., that the "Russian" article of October 29 was the cause of great excitement in Berlin, has not been without support in recent German literature. A similar view of the article is accepted by Wilhelm Becker, Fürst Bülow und England (Berlin, 1930), a work by no means favourable to the Chancellor, who, the author says, was unable sincerely to forward a policy of general Anglo-German understanding on account of the German naval policy. He describes Chamberlain's Edinburgh speech as taking Berlin "completely aback". For, if Chamberlain joined Salisbury, the offers of alliance were to no purpose, and one had to take into account the possibility of a radical change for the worse in the relations between the two countries. Moreover, a few days later, Metternich reported a Press campaign of The Times and the National Review aiming at a complete change of English policy on the lines that, as Germany was no longer to be relied upon, England ought to endeavour to come to a settlement with Russia. Here Becker quotes Fischer, Holstein's Grosses Nein, p. 279. Bülow became nervous and seemed to fear "a surrender of England to Russia". It was "in these circumstances that he asked Holstein to invite the collaborator of The Times, Chirol, with whom Holstein was acquainted, to Berlin".

The impression created by The Times article in the German Foreign Office is heavily dramatized by Werner Bauermann in Die Times und die Abwendung Englands von Deutschland um 1900 (Köln, 1939), pp. 73, 75. The writer, whose publication is a doctoral thesis, blames German diplomats for neglecting to inform Berlin of the nature of British feeling. Even after the excitement died down, he says, German diplomats pass over the matter "with carelessness which appears to us now as strange". In fact, the "sensation" of the first week of November was not the "Russian" or any other leading article in The Times, but rather the Voyron-Waldersee correspondence. "The exasperation of German feeling at the publication is being fomented by the Press," reported Saunders in The Times of November 2. In a final paragraph, after long quotations, the correspondent said that "One can only marvel at the polemical enterprise of the German Press which, on one and the same day, hurls epithets like 'impudent,' 'brazenfaced,' and 'arrogant' at a leading British statesman and at a prominent French general. Both in England and in France this spectacle of undiscriminating furor Teutonicus will probably be regarded with a certain scientific interest by students of foreign policy and national psychology."

The Kreuz-Zeitung, favourite organ of the agrarian-junker classes and not usually found on the British side, pointed out that what Saunders described as an "extraordinary storm of indignation" was "largely due to sheer ignorance of Mr. Chamberlain's remarks". (Cf. Saunders's article on "German Foreign Politics in 1901" in The Times, January 7, 1902. The date of the Kreuz-Zeitung referred to is November 27.) It was Bülow's rocher de bronze speech on January 8, with its readiness to believe in the intelligibility of German feeling against "the attempt, and even the appearance of the attempt, to misrepresent the heroic character and the moral basis of our struggles for national unity," that surprised The Times and incensed Chirol. Bülow's conclusion of this portion of his speech, which recalled Frederick the Great's remark "Let the man alone and don't excite yourselves, he is biting granite," was received with laughter and cries of "Very Good". This was the speech which rankled for years in Chirol's memory. He may have mistaken the occasion or forgotten the date of what he regarded as the Chancellor's going back on his promise, but he never forgave the man. He regarded Bülow's statement that he would not countenance attacks on Britain as a personal promise made to himself. This complaint appears in every account of the incident that he wrote between 1907 and 1927.

To complete this account of Chirol's work on the "alliance" question it should be noted that in 1920 Eckardstein published the two volumes of his Lebenserinnerungen. (Leipzig, Paul List.) Chirol reviewed them in The Times Literary Supplement for September 9. In the course of a notice extending to two columns, he said that it would come as a surprise to many "that we were never nearer than just during those years [i.e. the five years following the incident of the Kruger telegram] to committing ourselves to a definite alliance with Germany". He proceeds to summarize Eckardstein's account of the negotiations which, during the prolonged illness of Hatzfeldt, were in his charge. The story, Chirol says in the Literary Supplement, may be taken to begin with the visit of the Emperor William to Cowes in 1895. Eckardstein states that, at this meeting, Salisbury unfolded a scheme for the partition of the Ottoman Empire which the Kaiser refused point blank to consider. Was it not, Chirol asks, whether, "as there is more reason to believe, that William II himself produced such a scheme and Lord Salisbury declined even to discuss it?" He adds that the Foreign Office would do well not to allow Eckardstein's account to remain uncontradicted. Chirol then passes to consider the negotiations, beginning in 1899, when the Samoa question was being canvassed, and with

<sup>1</sup> Saunders pointed out that Frederick spoke in French and said "Il mord le granite".

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which Eckardstein was personally connected. He reviews the diplomatic moves which accompanied the Kaiser's visit to England during the same year, and explains how, despite great tension between the two countries, the "confidential conversations" were never dropped. "Every conceivable field was explored from Morocco to China for the basis of an Anglo-German alliance which, at the suggestion of the German themselves, who afterwards railed against the Anglo-Japanese Alliance as a shameful surrender of the white to the yellow races, might even have included Japan."

Of the value of Eckardstein's story Chirol expresses deep appreciation: "No one can question the sincerity of this illuminating, though not altogether edifying, chapter of 'secret diplomacy'." The author rightly regards the negotiations "in which he had so large a share as a turning-point in the history of the world, though no Englishman can to-day share his regret at the turning which history then took. One may note in conclusion with some satisfaction and pride that the wire-pullers in the Wilhelmstrasse who at that time sought to harness Great Britain to the German Empire associated The Times with Lord Salisbury, as the two great influences that chiefly contributed to the defeat of their wiles." It was after the review in the Literary Supplement of September 9, that Chirol contributed to The Times of September 11 and 13, 1920, two "turnover" articles, the writing of which was prompted by Eckardstein's book (and which have been referred to above as T.T.). He was entitled at this time to regard Eckardstein's revelations as sincere and authentic. The critical reviews of the book had not so far effectively demonstrated its specious quality. It was natural for him to rely upon it when he took up his pen at the age of 73 to write his last book of memoirs. Dr. Rosen's Oriental Memoirs was published after Chirol's death. The letter addressed to him on November 4 (reproduced at p. 334, supra) is in the style of Chirol; its date is correct and fits the context of events. Accordingly it has been accepted (see pp. 324, 334, supra).

It should be remembered that Chirol's health was never good and his sensitivity was acute. In addition, he was prone to secrecy and collected few papers. His correspondence was maintained partly from P.H.S. and partly from his flat at Queen Anne's Mansions. Much of what documentation he may have preserved could hardly have survived his several changes of residence after he left *The Times* in 1912, and, hence, he was not in the position to correct his memory when, at an advanced age, he began to write his memoirs.

Dreyer, Joh.: Deutschland und England in ihre Politik und Presse im Jahre 1901. (Berlin, 1934.)

After explaining (p. 33) that the St. James' Gazette, Daily Express and Daily Telegraph tendered the Emperor a friendly word of farewell on the termination of his visit at the beginning of 1901, he quotes the article of The Times of February 6, 1901, which concludes by saying that it is incredible that the visit should prejudice our relations with other great nations. Dreyer observes that The Times thereby clearly and definitely repudiated the ideas of William II who had made, the day before, a brief speech at Marlborough House which culminated in a suggestion of alliance. Dreyer notes (p. 36) that The Times, which since the beginning of the year had already criticized the German interpretation of the Manchuria treaty, was inclined to believe in the existence of a secret German-Russian agreement concerning China, and that while (p. 46) The Times and other papers retorted against German Press criticism during the Boer War, similar attacks from Russia and France hardly got their share of retaliation. He observes (p. 59) as follows:

For *The Times* and the *National Review* the question of the danger and threat of the German Fleet had full importance in 1901. One is therefore not entitled to consider several matters which, to outward appearance, take much space in the columns (and among them one might count the campaign against the pro-Boer German Press), as important, yet, nevertheless, not decisive problems.

Finally Dreyer decides that:

With regard to English newspapers of that tendency, the *Kreuz-Zeitung* (on May 8, 1901), rightly states that "England is staying aside not because of the hatred caused by the Boer war, but because of the commercial motive and the navy".

Dreyer is on surer ground in dealing (p. 64) with the Bagdad Railway:

1 See, for instance, Salomon, "Die deutsch-englischen Bündnisverhandlungen 1898-1901 im weltpolitischen Zusammenhang," in *Die Grenzboten*, Vol. 79 (1920), No. 34/35, pp. 200, et seq., and for a more critical, but not radical, account Hagen, "Deutsche Bündnispolitik," in *Preussische Jahrbücher* (Berlin, Autumn, 1921), also published in pamphlet form as No. 8 of the "Schriftenreihe der Preussischen Jahrbücher," 1922. The only critical account in English published before Chirol's is Archibald Cary Coolidge, in *American Historical Review*, April, 1921 (Vol. 26, p. 517), which is guardedly critical, conveying the impression that caution is necessary in the historical appreciation of Eckardstein's views. Volume XVII of *Die Grosse Politik* was published in 1924, and Chirol might have learnt much from it in advance of writing *F.Y.* 

The Government yielded to the increased anti-German feeling of the country. The leaders of the successful Press campaign were the editors of the Spectator and the National Review. One can count among them in particular also The Times Correspondent, Mr. Saunders, whose anti-German method of reporting can be seen from the extracts given above [i.e. in Dreyer's book]. The German statesmen had repeatedly drawn attention to his dangerous activity, without being able, however, to obtain a change in his attitude. The Times expressly refused in June, 1902, to comply with the wish of the King to give up its anti-German attitude.

Fester, Richard: "Das angebliche Bündnisangebot Englands von 1895" in Die Grenzboten, August 17, 1921, Vol. LXXX, pp. 171 ff

Garvin, J. L.: The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, Vol. III, 1895-1900. (London, 1934.)

Discusses the Cowes Meeting of 1895 in the light of Chirol's article in *The Times* of September 11, 13, 1920, and decides against Eckardstein.

German Press, Miscellaneous notices of The Times in the year 1902.

Reference to *The Times* in the German Press of the first half of 1902, is notable chiefly for the space given to the Bülow-Chamberlain incident and the repercussions of the Reichstag debate. *The Times* is often rebuked for its "persecution" of Germany (see the references in Dehn, *England und die Presse*, p. 29), but a criticism of the paper's policy, more substantial in kind, carrying interesting implications, appears in the *Hamburgischer Korrespondent* of June 11, morning edition. The dispatch came from the Hamburg paper's London correspondent.

The policy of the clique whose most considerable organ is *The Times* aims in the first place at a *rapprochement* between England and America, and secondly between France and Austria. There is no doubt that this aim is being pursued with the greatest energy, and one only need look at the page of *The Times* which contains the foreign news, to see that its correspondents at Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg and New York are united by the one common thought of hostility against Germany. . . . Incidentally, I should like to mention that, simultaneously with very obvious flirting with the circles of the Austrian Embassy in London, an agitation, even more spiteful and venomous than before, of the Vienna correspondent against anything German is conspicuous. The Alpha and Omega of all this mischief-making is the allegation that it is Anglophobia which has created the German Navy . . . the fear of German competition, and that developments in South Africa might push German trade to the first rank, these are the elements of the German-baiting which is stirring up popular instincts. . . .

The Richthofen-Saunders incident (see p. 363, supra) was the occasion for comment in the German journals regarding the anti-German attitude of The Times. A statement occurs in the Deutsche Revue ("Nach dem Sturm," Vol. XXVII, 1902, II, p. 52). A "German diplomat" writes that the bearing of the English Press will have an influence on the German Press which should not be under-estimated, since, unfortunately, German journalists have not yet become accustomed to meet such attacks with the only possible attitude of calm rejection. In particular, *The Times*, the author adds, which recently started and still continues an anti-German campaign in which allegations about European intervention in the Spanish-American war and about subsidies to German shipping companies are mentioned. Fortunately, the author adds, the influence of *The Times* is no longer "equal to its size," yet the attacks of *The Times* and other yellow papers had already spread anti-English feeling to a large extent, and their continuation might increase this legitimate anger, to the disadvantage of English interests. On October 2, an unsigned leading article in the Grenzboten ("Nach dem Burenkriege," Vol. 61, IV (1902), p. 1) deals frankly with the general subject of Anglo-German relations. "Certainly, English policy and, even more, a portion of the English Press, by its haughtiness, conceit and malevolent treatment of our national concerns, had for decades given ample reason for ill-feeling; but it is no sign of political maturity that a great part of our Press and of its readers lost all calm consideration so that their hearts metaphorically speaking bolted away from their heads and that what followed was only a sentimental policy. . . . Now the war is over, a continuation of the bitter polemics which showed only the absolute powerlessness of the German Press in important foreign affairs and did no good to the Boers, is not now of the slightest use. We are even with the hostile attitude of part of the English Press since 1863. It is time to recall the numerous intellectual and material relations which we have in common with England." The writer admits (p. 274) that, "in spite of denials, there is no question that the hatred of England which is still eagerly fostered by an irresponsible Press, plays a big part in the enthusiastic reception [of the Boer generals]".

At the end of the year, the attitude of the paper towards the Venezuela question, and Kipling's poem "The Rowers," published on December 19, 1902, caused the German Press great annoyance. The poem rejected the suggestion made by "the Goth and the shameless Hun" that England should help Germany collect the Venezuelan debt:

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"Look South! The gale is scarce o'erpast that stripped and laid us down, When we stood forth but they stood fast And prayed to see us drown."

The Vossische Zeitung, December 23, accepts it as a regrettable fact, to be put up-with, that the poem is a true expression of Germanophobe feeling in certain English circles. The National-Zeitung, December 24, sees no reason for Germany to get excited about the British poetaster. The Kölnische Zeitung, in its London dispatch of December 28, while calling the incident regrettable, finds it somewhat exhilarating. Germanophobia reigns, the correspondent claims, not so much in the leading circles as among the lower classes which are being worked up by London German-baiters and foreign agents. More serious is Schiemann (Kreuz-Zeitung, December 31, Deutschland und die grosse Politik, II, p. 443). Kipling does not know anything of Germany; he expresses his hatred with brutality; the poem is the most infamous outburst ever produced by the English Press. Schiemann feels no surprise that The Times published it. The year ended, so far as Anglo-German Press polemics were concerned, on a note that precluded all optimism regarding an understanding between Britain and Germany.

Preller, Hugo: Salisbury und die türkische Frage im Jahre 1895. (Stuttgart, 1930.)

Primke, Werner: Die Politik der "Times" von der Unterzeichnung des Jangtse-Abkommens bis zum Ende der deutsch-englischen Bündnisbesprechungen, Oktober 1900 bis Mai 1901. (Berlin, 1936.)

The author differs in tone and intention from the majority of German writers regarding The Times. He contradicts (p. 130), Lorenz who, at p. 77 of his Die Englische Presse (see p. 801, supra) states that the representative (berufensten) organs of the Conservative Party (Spectator, National Review and The Times) had organized a systematic Press campaign against Germany since 1901. Primke finds this statement incorrect, in the first place, as describing The Times as an organ of the Conservative Party; but, secondly, "precisely in The Times," Primke says, "a sufficient number of appreciations of German-English relations are to be found, for example, Germany's strict neutrality during the Boer war, and the merits she earned by her Chinese policy. . . Even the attitude of Saunders, who in no way represents the attitude of The Times, does not change this picture." Primke, proceeding to deal with the paper's long-term policy, observes that "the attitude of The Times towards Germany is different from its attitude towards other countries. Every time when—but only when—there is a possibility that the world might gain the impression that closer relations with Germany might be possible, The Times becomes defensive, not against Germany, but against too close an Anglo-German friendship. One is entitled to assume that, had Germany complied with the English claims concerning the interpretation of the Yangtze treaty, The Times would merely have observed that Germany could not have possibly adopted a different attitude."

Primke rightly observes that:

In examining the motives [of P.H.S.] it should again be mentioned that *The Times* was still moving in the circle of splendid isolation. Considering further that just at that time the term of "alliance" was used by the world Press in connexion with Anglo-German relations, one can understand that it was precisely Germany against whom *The Times* had to uphold a defensive position.

The author touches upon the question whether the German Navy was already influencing the attitude of *The Times*. This question is answered in the affirmative by Dreyer (pp. 63, 111) but Primke is not of the same opinion. He finds (p. 132) that even the pro-Boer attitude of German public opinion was not of decisive importance for *The Times*. Nor, for Primke, is there any question of an Anglo-German trade rivalry.

In fact, no concrete matter of conflict whatsoever between England and Germany can be ascertained in that period. One has to go deeper to discover the reasons of the attitude of *The Times*. Throughout, it is to be noticed that *The Times* is possessed by an unsurmountable distrust of Germany. At what time this distrust was aroused originally, is difficult to ascertain. If we follow the explanations of *The Times* Correspondents, the change would have taken place with the accession of William II to the throne. . . . For *The Times*, Germany is the country of malicious joy (*Schadenfreude*) and bargaining (*schachernder Geist*). Nobody cares to hear of the racial relation with Germany; and all the less since, in Germany, a friendly attitude towards England was regarded as high treason. For that, the Junkers and the Pan-Germans are mainly to be blamed.

The author makes a reference (p. 135) to the staff of *The Times*, which coming as it does from an unexpected source may be excusably quoted:

However, neither the representatives of German official policy, nor the responsible German journalists of that period can stand a comparison with their English opposite numbers. . . . Still more obvious becomes the difference between the opponents if we regard public opinion. . . Detrimental as they have been to Germany in their character as representatives of the English Press, the editors and correspondents of *The Times* cannot but wring highest esteem from us. Gentle-

men and patriots, as familiar with all political events as the representatives of official policy, they did what they considered right in the interest of England's greatness, in full independence and only responsible to their own conscience. On the German side, there were no journalists of the calibre of a Chirol, Steed, Saunders and Morrison.

Ritter, Gerhard: Die Legende von der verschmähten deutsch-englischen Freundschaft, 1898-1901. (Freiburg, 1929.)

The writer believes (p. 4) that German "Englandhass" was of older date, although it exploded during the Boer War, and says that the Reichsmarineamt was responsible for a lot of it. "How little sincere, however, all that anti-English attitude of our public opinion really was, how little genuine political experience and how much propaganda was behind it, was shown by the radical change after the war." He then discusses the Eckardstein negotiations and explains that improbably Chamberlain, but in no case Salisbury and the influential political circles in England, seriously meant to conclude an alliance with Germany in 1898-1901. He proceeds to point out (p. 16) that "the greatest obstacle to an Anglo-German alliance was the fundamental difference, and even antagonism between the vital political interests of England and Germany". England is a worldembracing empire; her interests oversea are obviously stronger than her European interests proper. In Germany, the opposite is the case; the security of the German frontiers in Europe is the most vital concern of the Central European country; the colonial problem, in relation to that, of a secondary importance. With this view The Times would not have disagreed at any time between 1901 and 1904, and later.

Uplegger, Fritz: Die englische Flottenpolitik vor dem Weltkrieg, 1904-1908. (Stuttgart, 1930.)

The reasons for the notorious and particularly striking Germanophobia of The Times have, in the opinion of this writer, become much clearer by the recent publication of Chirol's Fifty Years, 1920. "From 1897-1912." he says (p. 21) "the foreign department of The Times was under the direction of Valentine Chirol, who apparently was a man of a rather clear-sighted and firm character and knew how to hold his own also with the diplomats." He notes his career in Berlin and his acquaintance with Holstein "whom he esteemed rather highly". Through him Chirol acquired knowledge of the working methods of the Press Department of the Foreign Office. The attention Saunders gave to the German Press originated, Uplegger suggests, from the same cause. He proceeds (p. 22) to say that Holstein talked too freely to Chirol—this "influential and, as he knew, by no means pro-German" journalist—and often about confidential and private matters in a manner which, for the sake of German dignity. nobody in Holstein's official position should have permitted. It was thus that Chirol and his colleagues came to the conclusion that Britain must be made to realize the unreliability of German policy

Witte, Count: Memoirs. (London, 1921.)

Woodward, E. L.: Great Britain and the German Navy. (Oxford, 1935.)

The writer is interested, incidentally, in the impact of public opinion upon foreign and defence policy (see Vol. I, p. 474, of this History for mention of the chapter on "The Classification of Historical Material" in the same writer's War and Peace in Europe, 1815-1870 (London, 1931)). Hence he makes frequent reference to The Times and the Kölnische Zeitung and other newspapers in his treatment, in Chapter I, of the German Navy Bills of 1900 and later; and in his Chapter II dealing with the Anglo-German reactions during the Boer War.

"Wozu der Lärm" in the Deutsche Revue. (Berlin, April, 1905.)

The article in the April, 1905, issue of the Deutsche Revue, written before Tangier and reviewing the general situation, deals at length and with great bitterness with Morrison's various reports. German comment upon the Portsmouth Conference "famous correspondent of The Times at Peking, Dr. Morrison" was also present, presumably in order to represent unofficially Chinese interests". His dispatches, it is said, show that he has "completely lost touch with Europe". Metternich reports on August 15 (G.P. XIX, No. 6338, p. 635) that Witte, during his visit to London before the conference, cleverly managed to surround himself with Russophile journalists like Mackenzie Wallace of The Times and Dillon of the Deily Telegraph. In the like Mackenzie Wallace of The Times and Dillon of the Daily Telegraph. In that connexion, it is interesting that Witte should write in his Memoirs (p. 138) about both. They travelled on the same boat with him to America and he liked Dillon. But Wallace and Witte never had any use for each other: "Among the journalists at the Portsmouth Conference was also Mackenzie Wallace, special correspondent for King Edward. To judge by the fact that until just the moment of the signing of the treaty he asserted that the treaty would not be concluded, he must have been constantly misleading His Majesty the King of England. At one time, Wallace was political editor of The Times. He may be a good publicist, but he has always misinformed his compatriots about Russia. He speaks Russian well. He has a weakness for everything aristocratic. When in Russia, he stays with aristocratic families and hobnobs with the smart set exclusively. All he hears there he takes for gospel truth and faithfully transmits to his

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countrymen. No one takes him seriously in England though. Some time ago, he wrote a book about the Russian peasantry in which he sang paeans to our 'obshchina' (communal land system). Six months before the outbreak of our revolution (1905-1906), he issued a new edition of this work, where he asserted that, owing to the wise communal organization of our peasantry, a revolution in Russia was an impossibility. The winter of 1906-1907 he spent in St. Petersburgh and, I was told, referred to me in his reports in terms far from flattering. He must have been influenced by the circles with which he rubbed elbows. The fact that I slighted him in America may also account for the ill-will he bears me. On one occasion I told him that his work on Russian peasantry showed how even intelligent people may err when looking through other people's eyes."

Zabel, Rudolf: Deutschland und China. (Berlin, 1902.)

Herr Zabel says (p. 393) that "it has been claimed that Dr. Morrison angled his news, as far as Germany is concerned, spitefully and in favour of the English, and suppressed [similar] happenings on the English side. But Dr. Morrison is very objective and he allows blunders on the English side as little to pass as on the German side."

Morrison made his first appearance in the German Press in connexion with an interview with the Chinese Minister in London. The National-Zeitung of September 14, 1900, using the words of its London correspondent, described Morrison as one "for whom there is now so much noisy publicity being made". The writer proceeded to describe him as a "quite nice and ambitious young man who has gained the esteem of his fellow-countrymen by some nice sporting performances," and ends in the best style of Teutonic omniscience by saying that "he has no opinion of his own, since his convictions are prescribed to him by London". Morrison next attracts criticism in Austria by his animadversions upon Captain Thomann (Wiener Abendpost, October 15, 1900; cf. National-Zeitung and Vossische Zeitung, October 16, 1900). Bauermann, W., Die Times und die Abwendung Englands von Deutschland, 1900-01 (Berlin, 1939) views (p. 70) Saunders's reply to the Kölnische Zeitung's Yangtze statement as a regrettable sign of the ever-increasing extent to which England is driving away from Germany. He would like to know what Saunders's reasons were for alleging a secret German-Russian agreement, whether and why he really believed in it, or whether the allegation was a mere ballon d'essai sent up to elicit an official statement. Bauermann's question proves that he had not understood that the paper's policy at the time was at least as anti-Russian as it was anti-German. Regarding China, Holstein had already written to Eckardtstein on December 29, 1900 (Eckardtstein II, p. 226), describing an article in *The Times*, December 27, 1900, about a Russian loan as a feeler (obviously for an Anglo-Russian rapprochement): quite, he thinks, in harmony with the tendency of The Times, "the Berlin correspondent of which, after the conclusion of the Anglo-German treaty, had said that the English Government must be mad to make friends with Germany instead of Russia". This conception of The Times policy as directed towards an Anglo-Russian Far-Eastern entente seems to have been widely spread in Germany at the time and explains the treatment of Morrison by the Vossische Zeitung and others. Morrison, however, is described by Schiemann (Kreuz-Zeitung, June 18, 1902, Deutschland und nowever, is described by Schemanii (Newz-zening, Julie 10, 1902, Bettschind und die grosse Politik II, 241) only a little later as one who, while endeavouring to undermine Anglo-German relations in the Far East, was working with all his might for an Anglo-Russian war. Chéradame (Le Monde et La Guerre russo-japonaise, Paris, 1906; p. 157), too, calls him an ardent anti-Russian. Waldersee, Morrison's principal butt, speaks in his Diaries (entry of January 3, 1901, Denkwürdigkeiten, Vol. III, p. 80) of the correspondent of The Times at Peking as of a "nasty scamp," intriguing against him in cooperation with the British Legation; and apparently he was recalling Chihli dispatches when, on February 26 (III, p. 100) he expresses himself, with soldierly candour, in strong letters about Morrison and The Times. It may be accidental, but seems odd that Waldersee does not mention the correspondent's name in his first entry, and says in the second that *The Times* articles doubtless emanate "from a Dr. Morrison". The first entry looks as if he is speaking of somebody he knows personally and may refer to Chirol who was in Peking.

This German estimate of Morrison is the direct contrary of that formed by Rudolf Zabel (p. 393) quoted above. Zabel, who was a German war correspondent, describes Morrison, in connexion with the excesses committed by the expeditionary force, as strictly objective, ready to expose British excesses as well as those of the Germans. Newman (Roving Commission, London, 1937) who came to Peking with the Relief Force, describes the looting as having been done by everybody, except the Americans, to such an extent that, when Waldersee arrived, there can hardly have been anything left to loot. According to Newman, Waldersee's arrival was welcomed because he re-established order (pp. 50ff.). Yet Morrison's castigations of the German methods in the province of Chihli were undeniably severe and drew strong protests from the German Press. The Berliner Neueste Nachrichten (January 2, 1901, quoted by Anderson, p. 329; see p. 791, supra) warns the British Press that, as long as they continue their recriminations, they can only expect to have their offers of friendship refused. The Vossische Zeitung, of the same date, while readily admitting the editorial comment of The Times to be written in a friendly tone, has it that Morrison himself is—not for the first time either—seeking to disturb the good official relations between England and Germany. It is to be noticed,

since it is probably not unintentional, that the Vossische Zeitung speaks of good official relations and not of good relations in general. The Hamburgischer Korrespondent, January 3, notes that The Times does not believe every word of Morrison's accusations while the other London papers are more sceptical. The Berlin correspondent of the Daily Telegraph assured his paper quite definitely that Morrison's accusations were unfounded. From a report of the American Associated Press, the conclusion is drawn that behind Morrison's campaign was Li Hung Chang.

In spite of the German agitation, the critical attitude of The Times towards Russia did not remain far below the surface. During this time, Chéradame (p. 117) quotes the Peking dispatch of April 29, 1903, about Russian demands on China and (p. 118) the threatening reply of the Novoye Vremya (May 5). On May 14, the Russian Foreign Minister lodged an official complaint, and the answer of the British Ambassador shows that the attitude of The Times much embarrassed and annoyed British official circles. (G. and T. II, No. 231, p. 204.) The expulsion of Braham, The Times correspondent at St. Petersburg, was noted but not commented upon by the German Press. Now The Times, said Chéradame (p. 156), could never be friendly towards Russia. In general, he says, the anti-Russian and pro-Japanese feelings of Morrison and Brinckley exercised an enormous influence. Cambon writes to Delcassé on August 6 about the daily attacks on Russia. German papers, on the other hand, notice the anti-Russian campaign mainly in so far as it is interwoven with the alleged anti-German campaign. The Vossische Zeitung, August 18, argued that, as Great Britain had badly let down her Japanese ally, The Times looks for a scapegoat; that, if a scapegoat is needed, the obvious thing is to fix upon Germany; and hence a banquet of German and Russian naval officers is blamed for Japan's having to give way temporarily. The Times was a peculiar journal. The Süddeutsche Reichskorrespondenz (quoted by the Hamburgischer Korrespondent, September 21) noted that the new anti-German campaign of The Times is not approved, even in England. The Hamburgischer Korrespondent, September 24, and the National-Zeitung, October 13, protest against the repeated allegations of the existence of a secret German-Russian agreement, mainly propagated by Saunders. The Hamburgischer Korrespondent of October 20, 1904 (evening), printed a message from its London correspondent that needs quotation:

It may be taken as a favourable sign that the fresh and unjustifiable attacks of *The Times* against the alleged aims of German policy—this time in connexion with the Tibet problem—have been ignored by all the other papers, just as the Tsingtao story had been ignored the other day. Fortunately, the hour is past when *The Times* was an authority for all the other London papers. Methodical Germanophobia, without any relation to the truth, has lately been shown much too openly by *The Times* to make it possible for the editors of the other papers to continue being instrumental as hitherto in the propagation of the canards released from Printing House Square. Hence, these canards have no longer their dangerous effect; for *The Times* is read by so few people, &c., &c."

The writer proceeds that

"Informed circles here take it as almost certain that the report, though dated from Peking . . . was invented, in all details, by the foreign editor of *The Times*, the same who, when he came to Berlin as correspondent of the paper, had stated frankly that he came on a special mission, viz., to do all he could to prevent good Anglo-German relations. This private and special aim of *The Times* is apparently also the reason of this latest insinuation against German policy."

That this reference to Chirol is completely unjust has been seen in Chapter X. The desire of the Germans at this time to discredit *The Times* was extreme. For any statement that turned out to be falsified by events, no language was too severe. Chirol's Yangtze report and Morrison's Tibet report were never forgotten or forgiven. Schiemann (Kreuz-Zeitung, February 8, 1905, Deutschland und die Grosse Politik V, p. 49) recalls the attitude of The Times in the Tibet affair in 1904 at great length and is shocked at seeing The Times, instead of admitting that Germany had been wrongly attacked, censuring the British Government for publishing the Blue Book which should have made it difficult for the London paper to uphold its calumnies. In his opinion it was "monstrous" that The Times should choose this of all moments for another attack and calls attention to the authorship of Morrison, of whose "unquestionable reliability" the readers had had the opportunity to convince themselves, the same Morrison who had put up the perfidious and mendacious" reports about the Tibet treaty. The National-Zeitung, February 10, 1905, thought it appropriate to pin down Morrison's report about the cooperation between the Deutsch-Ostasiatische Bank and the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, as typical of the ways and methods of *The Times* and its Peking Correspondent. The publication of the British Blue Book about Tibet, it must be admitted, disposed of the allegation that German intervention had prevented the ratification of the Anglo-Chinese treaty. It almost coincided with Morrison's dispatches attacking Anglo-German cooperation in China and alleging German intrigues in China; in particular her claiming the right to have her say with regard to the appointment of the Chinese governor of the Shantung province. This coincidence was clearly accidental, but the Germans naturally chose to see it in the opposite light.

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Summing up at the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, Chéradame (p. 157). describes Morrison as "known for a long time as a firm follower of Curzon, and therefore as a frank Russophobe". The correspondent's position vis-à-vis Russia was not displeasing to the Germans. On January 25, 1904, the London correspondent of the Kölnische Zeitung describes him as not only a great expert, but also one very careful in the appreciation of his sources. This compliment, moreover, is bestowed in connexion with Russia's military preparation in the Far East. However, such appreciation of the man and the correspondent was reversed on the occasion of the Tiber report (Bülow in the Reichstag, December 5, 1904). In his interview with the Montreal Gazette, Bülow qualified the allegations of The Times about Tibet as "lies and loose tattle" (Dehn, England und die Presse, p. 44); he spoke at length about the matter to Bashford in the XIXth Century interview, without directly accusing Morrison of lying though hinting at the possibility of misinformation by some Chinese source. In his Reichstag speech of December 5, the Tibet incident is one of the two instances of particularly outrageous troublemaking Bülow mentions, and is called a "lie". Again, on June 11, 1905, Bülow thought it necessary to complain about the matter (G.P. XIX, p. 628, and G. and T. III, No. 97, p. 79). Lorenz (p. 83) allows that he is always well informed in matters which give no opportunity to show his blind hatred of Germany. In this Morrison was assisted, Lorenz (p. 84) says, by The Times correspondent in Tokyo.

# XIII. ENTENTE CORDIALE; GERMAN PRESSURE

Bardoux, Jacques: Essai d'une psychologie de l'Angleterre contemporaine; Les crises politiques. (Paris, 1907.)

Bardoux sees in the attitude of The Times during 1901 the beginning of a "methodically organized campaign of the English Conservative Press" ' (he mentions particularly, The Times, the Spectator and the National Review) "to destroy the traditional sympathies for Germany so completely that there should not even remain a recollection thereof," and to prepare an Anglo-French agreement. This argument is first to be found in the Journal des Débats of April 15, 1904 (the article is reprinted in full in Kreuz-Zeitung, April 20, 1904, Deutschland und die Grosse Politik IV, p. 122, and in the relevant parts of Lorenz, p. 77), and although this article, written to welcome the conclusion of the entente, has a definite propagandistic aim, Bardoux apparently meant it seriously, as the idea is developed at some length in his Essai, pp. 105 ff. Bardoux reports (pp. 87-8) a conversation, in June, 1901, with "le' foreign editor' du plus important des organes de Londres" who assured him of his pro-French sympathies. It can safely be assumed that the newspaper is The Times; and the "foreign editor" Chirol. The article in the Journal des Débats is often quoted afterwards by political writers and historians, as evidence of the strong and persistent Germanophobia of The Times and equally of the paper's early pro-French sympathies and desire for an Anglo-French rapprochement (for example, Lorenz, p. 77; Dehn, England und die Presse, p. 42 ff.); Primke (p. 129) denies that there was any definite policy of rapprochement behind The Times articles. According to him, as the paper was still isolationist the articles in question were merely meant to frighten the Germans and were always published when it seemed important to show them that Great Britain had nothing to fear. Writing in 1903, Schiemann (Kreuz-Zeitung, April 15, 1903; Deutschland und die Grosse Politik III, p. 127), on the other hand, states that an influential group of English politicians had been for the last two years, working with the support of The Times and the Standard, for an Anglo-French entente and would have succeeded already but for the Franco-Russian alliance. Primke (p. 129) cites articles which he rightly interprets as signs of the continuous adherence of *The Times* to the principle of isolation so far as European Powers are concerned. The truth was that while at this period *The Times* opposed an alliance with Germany, it did not yet give its authority to the advocacy of cooperation with Russia although the paper was, in a quite general way, willing to discuss a French orientation.

Bardoux who writes as an "eye-witness" and is, generally speaking pro-English, thinks (Essai, pp. 108-9) that The Times, "this most English of all the British newspapers," had fallen victim to a fear of Germany and the Triple Alliance, and also of Russia. That panic, he says, had become almost an obsession; it is not the outcome of a specific, acute threat, but rather the expression of the growing realization of restiveness at the dangers of isolation. Such a view would ultimately lead to the expression in The Times of a marked tendency towards rapprochement with one European State or other; but the attitude towards France with regard to the Morocco problem was hardly compatible with it. Bauermann, op. cit. (p. 801, supra)

The writer finds (p. 57) that the leading articles of March 12 and 14, 1900, exhibit the first signs of a turning towards France. In the 12th appears the outline of the Entente Cordiale. The tragic feature of this change of British attitude was that it had not been caused by purely political facts. The Anglophobia of many German papers and associations and, he thinks, the way in which the German Government upheld their rights in the Bundesrath affair, were factors working to the same effect.

De Lanessan, J. L.: Histoire de l'Entente Cordiale Franco-Anglaise. (Paris, 1916.)

P. 221 ff. refers to articles in *The Times*, November 27 and 28, 1896, and says that their thesis (i.e., of "splendid isolation") was supported by the paper to the eve of 1914 on account of Egypt. Chapter XIV "L'Angleterre Inquiète" pp. 270 ff. summarises the views of the *Standard*, Westminster Gazette, Morning Post, Manchester Guardian, &c., on the German Naval Bills. As an example of the continuity of European foreign policies the author emphasises that ever since Francis I entered into alliance with the Sultan against Charles V, Franco-Turk cooperation had seemed to be the Habsburgs' paramount danger.

Friedjung, H.: Das Zeitalter des Imperialismus, 1884-1914. (3 vols., Berlin, 1919-1922.) According to Friedjung (I, p. 401), The Times correspondent at Tangier, and MacLean were the real rulers of Morocco. Regarding Harris's successful attempts to prevent an Anglo-French settlement of the Morocco question in 1902 and his endeavours to enlist German support for that purpose, cf. Mathews, infra, pp. 26, 123, and G.P. XVII, p. 344. Harris's kidnapping in 1903 is mentioned but hardly commented upon in the German Press, since the correspondent's pro-French leanings were then taken as proved. But his relations with the French official representatives cannot have been very friendly, as Saint René-Taillandier, the French Minister, does not mention him in his Les origines du Maroc français (Paris, 1930) which is written as a diary. On the other hand, Harris wrote, in December, 1903, a letter (Moulin, R.: Une année de politique extérieure, Paris, 1905; p. 57) which takes up eight printed pages, and sums up that "a long residence [in Morocco] . . . has given me the firm conviction that France is not only fully entitled to intervene but that such intervention would be fortunate for the world in general. A special coincidence of circumstances renders the present time particularly appropriate for action." An article of his in the National Review (April, 1904) is pro-French. Stress is laid on this fact in the reprint in Questions Diplomatiques (18, p. 700). Guibert-Ferrette (p. 40) notes rightly that from the conclusion of the entente The Times is very favourably disposed towards French aspirations. On the other hand, Kühlmann notes on October 1, 1904 (G.P. XX, No. 6386, p. 33) that, in spite of the Anglo-French entente, Harris continues an anti-French agitation while at the same time maintaining close relations with the British Legation. Schoettle (p. 9) and Wahl (Deutsche Geschichte IV, p. 253) regard him as extremely hostile to France at that period. According to Hamburgischer Korrespondent, January 3, 1905, the French adviser of El Mokri described him as the worst enemy of France. His Tangier dispatch of March 19, 1905, which he himself admitted (Bérard, L'affaire marocaine (Paris, 1905); p. 394, notes it with indignation) as having been given to him by the German Legation, is entirely misunderstood in the German Press, but the French (cf. Le Temps, March 21, 1905) were much puzzled, too: and the National-Zeitung, March 28, calls him a friend of the Jingoes in whose ears Harris's Macchiavellian dispatches will be as music. About his attitude during the later stage of the 1905 crisis, cf. Schoettle, pp. 44 and 225. Schoettle (see p. 801, supra) who is a Nazi disciple of Wahl (who explains the anti-German policy of The Times by his discovery that it is a Jewish paper) gives, in the first part of his book, an analysis of the daily comments of The Times on the development of the crisis. He deals at p. 43 at some length with the change of attitude of "Chirol" who shows full understanding of the German point of view in the letter to Harris, and then takes an entirely different view in the article of March 23. The explanation is that Chirol, being absent, wrote nothing between January 31 and April 1, 1905. The article of March 23 was written by McDowall. Schoettle believes that this change of "Chirol's" attitude had been effected by the announcement of the Imperial visit (March 20): "Chirol" may have heard rumours about it before but not attached too much weight to them and may have now, under the influence of his idea of the role of the German Press, looked at the matter from a different angle after reading the announcement and have suspected far-reaching aims on the part of Germany. He may have foreseen danger for the Anglo-French entente, and, at the same time, a possibility to transform it into an alliance. However that may be, Schoettle admits that there is no reason to assume "eine schlimme Zweideutigkeit" on Chirol's part. Schoettle (p. 9) offers it as his conclusion that only Wallace and Harris can be regarded as correspondents of The Times who were not among the adversaries of Germany. The least anti-German of all was Harris. He was, Schoettle thinks (p. 44), anti-French for economic reasons and kept silent after March 20 because (p. 225) "he

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realized that the German Government was much more interested in Europe" and probably because he was instructed from London to do so, but (p. 44) now and then stood up for Germany; and if it is true that his reports became dry and showed an undertone of ill-feeling against Germany, he never gave up his fundamental point of view. Before the Agadir crisis, Harris is not mentioned in the French documents and mentioned only twice in the German documents and each time a neutral source is quoted. Schoen, Ambassador in Paris, wrote to Bethmann-Hollweg on April 28, 1911 (G.P. XXIX, p. 98):

Mr. Botkin, the Russian Minister at Tangier, who is a friend of mine, told me that . . . nobody at Tangier shares the apprehensions of the French about the fate of the Europeans at Fez, except the French Legation and the affiliated journalists, to whom also, *The Times* Correspondent, Mr. Harris, belongs.

The Belgian Minister at Tangier, reported on May 2, 1911 (Schwertfeger, Zur Europäischen Politik, III, 235; cf. G.P. XXIX, p. 98, note) that even the French Minister disagreed with his Government and the Press:

The French Chargé d'Affaires himself, who should know best, says that Paris hardly ever corresponds with him, and claims to have been surprised by the sudden decision of the French Government to march on Fez, the more as he had never ceased to advise them to restrict themselves to the use of local forces, sufficient to master a situation which the Paris journalists appear to paint black ad libitum. The same applies to The Times, the Tangier correspondent of which, Mr. Harris, has been entirely at the service of France since the entente cordiale.

The British documents report a conversation of Harris with Rosen in January, 1909 (G. and T. VII, No. 146-7, p. 131-2), which concerns nothing of importance. On the other hand, White's report of July 1, 1911 (G. and T. VII, No. 341, p. 324) shows how Merry del Val, the Spanish representative, was dissatisfied with Harris's dispatches:

evening, the Spanish Minister stated that the articles that had been appearing lately in *The Times* had done much harm to the Spanish cause, and that they very much regretted the change of policy of that influential paper from which they had expected support. Mr. Harris replied that there had been no change on the part of *The Times* or of himself as its Correspondent there. He had no desire to write anything unpleasant about Spain, but when the Spanish Government adopted the policy to shut all non-Spanish enterprise out of the Moorish districts adjoining their possessions, he was bound to take up the cudgels on behalf of the Union des Mines, and in the same manner he had to write about the recent action of the Spanish Government at Laraiche and Alcazar.

Fullerton, Wm. Morton: Problems of Power, A Study of International Politics from Sadowa to Kirk-Kilisse. (London, 1913.)

A penetrating study on realistic lines. The author is an American writer who was assistant under Blowitz in the Paris office of The Times from 1891 to 1909. He concludes by emphasizing the importance of the Panama Canal and America's peaceful role in World politics. Peace, obviously endangered by Germany, could be guaranteed by the combined forces of the British Empire and a self-denying United States and France. "Were the Americans, in the present state of the world, to succumb to the blandishments of Germany and accept any arrangement with that power, they would be selling their birthright" &c. (p. 313). The numerous references to The Times include messages sent by Blowitz, and by Fullerton in his capacity of assistant. See e.g. pp. 50-7 for early foreshadowings of an Anglo-French arrangement. Fullerton's telegram of Feb. 2nd, 1903, laying stress upon the European significance of Delcassé's offer to Lansdowne made in the summer of 1902 was the first public mention of the negotiations which resulted four years later in the entente.

Harris, Walter B., F.R.G.S. (Al Aissoui): The Land of an African Sultan—Travels in Morocco, 1887, 1888, 1889, with illustrations. (London, 1889.)

Dedicated to Sir Wm. Kirby-Green, British Minister to Court of Morocco, and Lady Kirby-Green.

Harris's first book is in four parts, covering a journey through N. Morocco, a journey with H.B.M.'s special mission to the Sultan's Court at Morocco City, a visit to Wazan, and a short account of Moorish life. The visit to the Sultan, in April, 1887, who was then Moulai Hassan, is fully described. Only the Minister was received in private audience.

Harris, Walter B., F.R.G.S.: Tafilet—The narrative of a journey of exploration in the Atlas Mountains and the Oases of the North-West Sahara. Illustrated by Maurice Romberg from author's sketches and photographs. (Edinburgh and London, 1895.)

Moulai Hassan, Sultan of Morocco, left Fez in April, 1893, to visit Tafilet, the most southerly part of his kingdom. He arrived in November. Harris seized his chance and, disguised, hurried to Tafilet from Saffi, on the Atlantic Coast. He had no interview with the Sultan, who was taken ill with quinsy and owed his life to the kindness of Caid Maclean, with whom he returned to Morocco City. The Sultan, worn out by the journey, died on the way back, and one of his sons, Mulai Abdul Aziz succeeded him. Harris described the intrigues necessary to bring about the accession of the new Sultan, who was only 16.

Harris, Walter B., F.R.G.S.: Morocco That Was. With illustrations. (Edinburgh and London, 1921.)

Diverting account of changes in Morocco after death of Moulai Hassan in 1894, and accession of Mulai Abdul Aziz. Harris describes the many unofficial missions he undertook for the Foreign Office and the use made of him by British Ministers—all without thanks or payment (pp. 27-9); his intimacy with Aziz and his successor, Mulai Hafid. In 1909 Harris, through *The Times*, exposed Mulai Hafid's cruelty to the wife of the Governor of Fez. The book gives unstinted praise to French administration in Morocco.

Mathews, J. J.: Egypt and the Formation of the Anglo-French Entente. (Philadelphia, 1939.)

The author thinks that despite denials, the British, in approaching the French, were inspired by Germanophobe feeling. It is the anti-German section of the British Press that nearly always, if not always, which is to be found advocating an entente with France. Metternich's opinion expressed to Bülow, June, 1903 (G.P. XVIII, p. 590) was that the entente was "a product of the general dislike of Germany ... Without the Anglo-German estrangement, an Anglophil feeling would not have been possible in France, and . . . without the feeling against Germany the British Press would not have been working for months in favour of a reconciliation with France." The Times, Daily Mail, Spectator, and National Review were the most anti-German of the British Press organs. Mr. Mathews quotes Professor Hale as having "shown how the men who directed the policy of *The Times*, became, in one way or other, anti-German in feeling, and in regard to foreign affairs, The Times was indisputably the leading English daily". (p. 49.) On Harris, the author has useful observations at pp. 36-9, with particular reference to the Lansdowne-Cambon negotiations over Morocco in 1902. That Britain rejected the French proposals is no proof at that time of any objection to a settlement with France. "Indeed, there is every reason to believe that the discussions might have continued successfully had it not been for the untimely leak concerning the nature of the French suggestions. Harris's campaign to bring the negotiations to an end was cleverly designed to embarrass the British Government. By informing the Germans of the negotiations, by stirring up the native Moorish Government, and by threatening to publish the story, Harris created a situation which made it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to continue the scheme. It seems likely too that Lansdowne intended merely to shelve the proposals until conditions should appear less inimical to an entente." (p. 123.)

Harris's opposition to possible British action likely to strengthen the French in Morocco is described by Mr. Mathews at pp. 36 ff. The first published news given in positive form of the Cambon-Lansdowne negotiations of August, 1902, was Fullerton's dispatch in *The Times* of February 2, 1903 (see W. M. Fullerton, Problems, p. 57) but in the meantime Harris had been taking advantage of a leakage. In what precise manner the "leak" occurred, Mr. Mathews has been unable to determine. In September, 1902, Harris, who had been making his headquarters at the Moorish Court, returned from London where he had been holidaying. Shortly after his return he reported the negotiations to the Sultan and later made similar disclosures to the German consular agent at Fez. Harris claimed to have had his information confirmed by Lord Lansdowne to whom he had presented himself as having been admitted into the secret by the English Legation at Tangier. Mr. Mathews quotes G.P. XVII, p. 344, September 14, 1902. One of Harris's motives was the breaking up of the negotiations. He suggested to the German consul, carefully requesting that his name be kept out of the affair, that an appeal for information by the German Government would bring an end to the discussion. He also wrote to Sir Arthur Nicolson, British Minister at Tangier, that unless the negotiations were broken off, he would proceed to embarrass the British Government by making them public property. There follows a résumé of Maclean's negotiations, based on G. and T. II, pp. 272-3 and Doc. Dipl. Français, 2, II, pp. 515, 522-4. On September 29 (cf. G.P. XVII, p. 347) Harris received a letter from Sir Arthur Nicolson to the effect that Harris's information regarding the Anglo-French negotiations was incorrect, and that such negotiations were not taking place—he did not say that they had not taken place. As for the threat by Harris to resort to the Press, Nicolson declared that an official denial from the Foreign Office would probably follow, which would place Harris in bad light. Nicolson's displeasure with Harris is expressed in a

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conversation with Taillandier. The British Minister then mentioned his apprehensions regarding Harris's influence at the Sultan's Court, and declared that he had complained to the Foreign Office about him (Doc. Dipl. Fr. II, pp. 556-7, October 23, 1902). By late September rumours had also found their way into the London Press and hence to Madrid, where they created considerable excitement. Hence Lord Lansdowne and the British Government were confronted on numerous sides with indications of opposition arising from the disclosures of the French proposals. About October 1, the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires in Paris called on the British Ambassador to express anxiety over the rumoured negotiations (G. and T. II, p. 267). A reasonable guess seems to be that the German Foreign Office chose this indirect method of following up the suggestion made by Harris.

Morel E. D.: Morocco in Diplomacy. (London, 1912.)

Morel, who had some knowledge of the standards of P.H.S. (he was chosen by Chirol to act on a retaining fee as occasional correspondent to deal with African affairs), quotes extensively from the paper. He says (p. 145)

If I quote *The Times* it is for three reasons, and no other. First because its admirable service of foreign telegrams makes it, deservedly, the inspirer of a considerable section of British newspapers, consequently of a considerable section of the British public; while it exercises a quite special influence over one of the two great political parties of the State. Secondly, because it is widely believed to have close relations with the Foreign Office. . . . Thirdly, because *The Times* has played, ever since 1905, a part in influencing British opinion over the Morocco affair which, whether it be regarded as sound and wise, or as unsound and mischievous, has been so conspicuous that to ignore that part would be impossible. The role of *The Times* must appear, indeed, to any student of the subject an integral factor in the diplomatic history since 1905. It should also be stated that a careful study of the despatches of *The Times* correspondent at Tangier shows, on the whole, a remarkable desire to be impartial, and that *The Times*, especially of late, has displayed its usual impartiality as a *newsrecorder* by printing several despatches from its correspondent commenting severely upon French action in the matter of land-grabbing.

But, Morel thinks, the standard was not maintained. Policy (he was opposed to the *entente*) demanded otherwise. At p. 88, he writes:

I commend a perusal of the foreign pages of *The Times* of this period—say from May to November, 1905. They make astonishing reading. The insults and threats to Germany mingled with personal abuse of the Emperor William, in the Paris and Berlin telegrams, especially the Paris telegrams, are incessant. No less remarkable is the partisan bias in favour of M. Delcassé against his home critics. Praise of M. Delcassé is the test of statesmanship, and the rare expressions of it are religiously recorded; criticism of his policy and the numerous expressions thereof are rigidly curtailed, or explained as evidence of the narrowest party politics. Germany's right to a say in the Moroccan settlement is scornfully denied.

# XIV. THE TIMES IN ADVERSITY AND LITIGATION

Courtney, Janet E.: Recollected in Tranquillity. (London, 1926.)

Miss Hogarth (as she was until she married Leonard Courtney in 1911) was appointed by Bell and Hooper to assist at *The Times* Book Club in 1905. She describes her experiences at pp. 167-185 and the changes introduced by Kennedy Jones. Chapter XIV is a portrait of Hooper written "because a sketch, sufficiently like to be more misleading than a real travesty, has appeared in Mr. F. Harcourt Kitchin's *Moberly Bell and his Times*." The account of the "E.B." and Hugh Chisholm is more inclusive in Mrs. Courtney's later volume.

Courtney, Janet E.: An Oxford Portrait Gallery. (London, 1931.)

Sketch of Hugh Chisholm (1866-1924) at pp. 107-157 is of general interest for the history of London journalism in the nineties and of particular value for the Encyclopaedia Britannica, under the chief editorship of Wallace when Chisholm was appointed assistant. His later career as head of the City Office of The Times is described at pp. 143 ff. and his return to the Encyclopaedia at p. 150.

Mills, J. Saxon: Sir Edward Cook. (London, 1921.)

Of value for the picture given of Liberal journalism under the pressure of the Northcliffe and Pearson Press at the end of the century, e.g., the provision of sectarian "ginger" for the Daily News as suggested by Arnold Morley: "Once or twice a week and as much as possible on fixed days, of which Saturday would probably be one, there should be a signed article written by some well-known

Nonconformist...." Cook replied (November 27, 1898): "Your idea about signed articles—which I think is worth trying. Hitherto I have relied rather on interviews—and during the last few weeks the Daily News has published interviews with Dr. Clifford, Hugh Price Hughes, Dr. Horton, Guinness Rogers; also with Mr. Perks, M.P... The Daily News has lost many readers to the Chronicle. But why?... The Chronicle got the start of the Daily News by some years in enlarging its size and scope—and also no doubt in spending large sums of money on its development generally. So with the Telegraph and the Mail. Their secret is their width, not their narrowness of range." (pp. 171-4.)

Schwabach, Paul: Aus meinen Akten. (Berlin, 1927.)

The author, who was a partner in the Berlin bank of Bleichröder, was closely connected with English banking circles. He was a brother-in-law of "Memorandum" Crowe and was British Consul General in Berlin 1898-1909, when the authorities decided to supersede him in favour of a British subject by birth (see leading article by Chirol in The Times, October 9, 1909; Schwabach was succeeded by Mr. Harry Boyle, the interesting Oriental Secretary attached to the staff of Lord Cromer). Schwabach's book is not intended as a contribution to history or even as a kind of autobiography. He wanted, he says, to give his friends something in remembrance of his 60th birthday and he commissioned one of his secretaries—not the brightest to select from his letters and notes what might be "interesting". The first part contains mainly letters to Alfred Rothschild written between 1900 and August 1. 1914, and to Eyre Crowe from 1904 onwards; a few to Joel, the managing director of the Banca Commerciale, on whose board Schwabach figured, plus one or two to Holstein and a few unnamed French politicians, some memoranda about the situation in England and meetings with French statesmen. The second part contains letters and notes of the war-period of little interest. The third part brings together letters and notes of the post-war period, among them an outspoken rebuke to Professor Flamm, who had accused Schwabach's friend, Crowe, of treachery since Crowe, the son of a German mother, had been so hostile to Germany. The whole of the first part shows Schwabach as a German patriot who, at the same time, ardently wished for good Anglo-German relations. He is very outspoken in his comments, for example, about the Chamberlain speech, the Baghdad affair and the two Morocco crises. After Agadir, he writes, the attitude of Germans against the English was more bitterly resentful than he had ever known. It was particularly bad in South Germany, the stronghold of Liberalism. Schwabach's correspondence with Eyre Crowe is unfortunately slight. The letter of January 31, 1908, concerning the sale of The Times confirms the view that the German Government did not dream of spending money on a foreign paper. The Embassy report and Berlin reply which had been shown to Schwabach have not been published; unfortunately, too, Crowe's letter and the letter of Schwabach which apparently preceded that of January 31 ("es ist abermals die Times-Angelegenheit") have not been printed. A Memorandum of May 20, 1908 (p. 141) is of interest as evidence of his view of the effect of the anti-German attitude of the English Press on English public opinion. Schwabach had long taken a close interest in The Times. On July 14, 1902, he informed Alfred Rothschild (p. 26) that he had been asked

who it is on the editorial staff of *The Times* who is so bluntly anti-German, what are the reasons of his attitude and where one might have to look for the people who are pulling the political wires in the paper? I was unable to answer these questions; but I should be much obliged to you if you would be good enough to inform me about it some time as I believe that an exact knowledge of these matters might contribute much towards a calmer appreciation. Unfortunately, the Berlin correspondent of *The Times* is also anti-German and may well exercise a permanent influence on his paper in this direction. The conversation related above left me with the distinct impression that the German Government is earnestly striving to put Anglo-German relations again on a footing of steady friendship.

In the following year, writing to the same correspondent, regarding the Baghdad Railway scheme, he said (April 25, 1903, p. 30) that:

The newspapers which are Germanophobe by principle, for example, the National Review and The Times, have exercised such an influence on English public opinion that the Government preferred to disapprove of the [Baghdad Railway] project. That has created the situation that everything the English feared and which, in fact, was not to be feared, has now happened. The Germans will now have the preponderant influence in the enterprise. . . We are surprised at the withdrawal of your compatriots; for not only were the financiers willing to join us, and had accepted the participation scheme, but Lord Lansdowne too had adopted a quite friendly attitude.

Schwabach is a good witness regarding the depth of conviction among ordinary Berliners that German policy was misunderstood in England. To Alfred Rothschild

he wrote on June 30, 1905, that (p. 76):

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In France people begin to realise that Germany has not the slightest idea of claiming anything to which she is not entitled and which might be a threat to others. In England, the excitement seems to be still too great as to expect people will realise that in the near future. I may merely mention that *The Times* has been indulging once more during the last days in the most violent and absurd attacks against German policy. People here are utterly convinced that the paper does not give, and does not want to give, objective information to its readers; but merely wants to agitate and to sow distrust as far as possible, so much so that they have realised now that it is quite futile to argue with these gentlemen.

How to Read the Newest Books without buying them or paying a Circulating Library for the use of them. (London, The Times, 1905.)

Annual subscription to *The Times* at £3 18s., to include a "service of books" without extra charge. The service "enabled subscribers to purchase as many, or as few, books as they choose" under extraordinarily advantageous terms.

"The Times" and the Publishers. (London, privately printed for the Publishers' Association, Stationers Hall, 1906.)

"The Times has declared war upon the publishers" (p. 1) and the trade retorts with the charge that "The Times Book Club" is a virtual monopoly since it proposes to undersell the rest of the bookselling trade.

Macmillan, Sir Frederick: The Net Book Agreement. (Glasgow, 1924.)

The text includes a memorandum by Mr. Edward Bell (of Messrs. George Bell and Sons) on the "Book War".

The very natural question as to how *The Times* could afford to give without charge a library service so far in advance of that given by others at the ordinary rate of payment was answered by the statement that the new project, it was anticipated, might double the existing circulation of the newspaper, and with that object in view the promoters were prepared to spend £100,000. "No circulating library," it was said, "has ever been established with the deliberate object of spending money instead of making money".

Books were also offered for sale to subscribers in different classes at varying discounts. In Class A, absolutely new copies were to be obtained at 25 per cent. below the published price, excepting works published at a price stated to be "net". In Class B were to be found "clean uninjured copies," virtually as "good as new," their condition indicating that they had been in circulation about a month; the discount here was 35 per cent. in most cases, and 20 per cent. in the case of "net" books. Class C represented a condition indicating about three months' use, and Class D a circulation of about six months', with correspondingly increased discounts. The percentage scale was illustrated. A biography published at 21s. (unless published "net" and in absolutely new condition) could be purchased for 15s. 9d.; a month later for 13s. 8d., two months afterwards for 10s. 6d.; and a copy six months old would be obtainable for 6s. 3d. It was explained that a trade agreement adopted by the publishers prevented any discount on absolutely new copies of "net" books. "Through four centuries of bookselling," it was said, "it has always been the practice to buy before reading, though to that is to buy in the dark, and to run a great risk that one will regret the purchase".

Premises were taken at 93, New Bond Street, and opened on September 11, 1905. The public showed great interest in the venture; the building was crowded from morning till night, and additional accommodation soon had to be provided. The large orders given to the publishers by this new and energetic agency for the circulation and distribution of books were, of course, welcomed by them until there came reason to believe that much of this increased business was being done to the detriment of booksellers and of the older libraries.

The sale at reduced prices of books classed as second-hand was viewed as a trade grievance, and complaint made to the Publishers' Association by the booksellers' organization. Discussion led to the definition by the Managers of the Book Club of a secondhand book as "one which has been used by more than two subscribers, and is returned in such a state that it cannot be sold as a new book". This definition was accepted in a letter signed by representative members of the Publishers' Association. The original premises became inadequate, and a large building just erected, occupying an island site, No. 376-384, Oxford Street, was taken. Another booklet was then issued, reminding subscribers that The Times Book Club had been in operation for seven months, and that in practice they had received from it benefits greater even than those which had been promised. It had become, the brochure stated, the largest buyer of books in the world, and had received thousands of letters from enthusiastic subscribers who especially appreciated (apart from the fact that the Library was free) the exceptionally wide choice of books offered, and the absence of the many causes of disappointment which were so often a ground of complaint elsewhere. It was conceded, however, that such complaints against other Libraries were often unjust, and readers were reminded that, while the ordinary library must make its own expenses and something more out of the business of circulating books, The Times Book Club needed to make no such effort and was not expected to cover its expenses. Again it was asserted that the Library

had been established with the object of increasing the circulation of *The Times*, and therefore "can properly afford to offer greater facilities than other libraries because it can afford to lose money while they must make it".

To signalize the transfer of the Library to the new premises there was announced for Tuesday, May 1, 1906, "the greatest sale of books that had ever been held," which would be open to all, whether members of the Book Club or not. The advertisement stated that a stock of 600,000 books of all kinds, of which the published prices would amount to £222,000, was to be sold for less than £25,000:

"Thousands of copyright books published at prices ranging from 30s. to 2s. 6d. each are offered NEW for 3d., 5d., 7d., 9d., 11d., 14d., 18d., 23d., and 30d. each".
... "It is the opinion of *The Times*" the advertisement continued, "that books have always been sold at too high a figure, that if their prices were reduced to a scale more in correspondence, for example, with the price of a newspaper, books would circulate in correspondingly larger numbers. In the course of two days, for instance, The Times itself prints in its columns and sells for 6d. (the price of two issues of The Times) as much news matter as is contained in an important biography published at 21s. net. The cost of the paper, printing and binding in the case of such a book may amount to 1s. 6d. The enormous balance of its price goes in profits to the publisher, author and booksellers, wholesale and retail. An enormous balance indeed, but by no means an enormous profit, because the quantity sold is small. At our great sale such books will be sold for 23 and 30 PENCE. Where do the books come from? The Times has purchased from the publishers direct, 500,000 books of different kinds; it has secured a further stock of 70,000 from dealers and other libraries, and has added to them books from the surplus stock of The Times Book Club. The books acquired direct from the publishers are of course entirely new. Of books from the other sources, any that have been used at all have been rebound in special bindings, and are therefore equal to new. The large discounts are possible because of the enormous scale on which our purchases were made."

The books, it was stated, had been published by all the leading publishers—by Messrs. Murray, Macmillan, Longmans, Smith Elder, Methuen, &c., and were books "of the most important and valuable kinds". In most cases purchasers would obtain a discount equal to 10d. in the 1s. The reader was invited to stock his library, and parcels were offered of 250 assorted books of Biography, Travel, Fiction, &c., for £23, 500 assorted books of Biography, Travel, Fiction, &c. for £42, 1,000 assorted books of Biography, Travel, Fiction, &c. for £80; and other sensational offers were made.

The building was so besieged by crowds of buyers that the doors had to be closed. Hooper made photographs of the scene, and *The Times* of the next day contained, by way of an apology, the statement that:—

"In announcing its great sale of books The Times never calculated upon any such response to its invitation as declared itself on the opening day.

"We had so organized the sale that some thousands of purchasers might, in the course of the day, inspect and choose the books they wanted. But we had not counted upon so many thousands at a time and throughout every hour of the day. Soon after 10 o'clock in the morning Oxford Street was blocked, and it was apparent that only a small proportion of those who had come could enter the building at all. The doors were accordingly closed, and were only again opened, at intervals of an hour, for two or three minutes at a time."

From this point trouble with the publishers was encountered. Books which had been described as "entirely new" had been offered at a discount, the list being headed by the recently issued biography of Lord Randolph Churchill, published at 36s. and offered at 7s. The Council of the Publishers' Association took action towards making more definite the terms of an agreement, the Net Book Agreement, forbidding discounts on such books, which had been adopted by the trade in 1899. That Agreement, a copy of which had been signed by Moberly Bell, contained, it is true, no reference to second-hand books, but the term "bona fide remainders," which it did contain, could hardly have been intended to apply to books recently published.

The next step was taken on July 4, 1906, when at a meeting of the Publishers' Association it was decided that the sale of Net books as secondhand within six months of the date of publication was forbidden, that dead stock must first be offered to the publisher at cost price or at the proposed reduced price, and that the Net Book Agreement should be so revised as to include these provisions. A suggestion that publishers should abstain from advertising in *The Times* was adopted "amidst general applause".

As Moberly Bell declined to sign the revised Agreement when it was presented to him, the name of *The Times* Book Club was put upon a black list, and the Managers were notified that until the Agreement should be signed by them Net books would not be supplied to it except at full price. Thus the Publishers declared "war"; in the words of Mr. Edward Bell, "the dogs of war being thus let loose, a terrible amount of barking and snarling ensued". The action of the two Associations was stigmatized by *The Times* in a series of special articles as an attempt at a monopoly and the restriction that they

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wished to place on the early sale of secondhand books at reduced prices as "running counter to both the natural course of business and the public convenience". In order to meet immediately the demand of Library subscribers, the policy of *The Times* had been, it explained, to purchase a very large number of copies on the publication of a book—a practice which naturally involved the return within a few weeks of a large number of volumes that would not be asked for again. This was obviously the right moment at which to begin to dispose of these surplus volumes. The protection of the bookseller—the ostensible reason for the action of the Publishers' Association—was declared to be illusory, for his difficulties would not be removed, or even lifted, if *The Times* were to cease the sale of these books. The troubles of which the trade had for so long complained were due, it maintained, to the high price at which books were published, and publishers were advised, in their own interest, and in that of the booksellers all over the country, to issue their new books at prices which would permit of a large sale to individual readers.

The Book Club claimed that it had purchased books from the publishers at a price named by them and at that point the publishers' rights ended. "Thereafter it is for us to do what we will with our own." The provision as to "dead" stock and the early issue of cheap editions constituted an injustice to the bookseller.

A paragraph printed in italics in the columns of the newspaper summarized its case as follows:—"The only question at issue between *The Times* and the publishers is as to whether the Book Club shall or shall not be allowed to sell secondhand 'net' books before they are six months old. *The Times* Book Club maintains its right to sell bona fide secondhand books when it likes and at what price it likes. The Publishers try to prohibit this, and to enforce their prohibition by charging higher prices to *The Times* than to other purchasers and by withdrawing their advertisements from *The Times*."

The Publishers' case was presented in a letter to the Editor of *The Times*, signed by Mr. William Poulten, the Secretary of the Publishers' Association, who, quoting the paragraph just mentioned, replied that "It is obvious that the whole controversy turns upon the term' bona fide'. What is a bona fide secondhand book?" In order, he said, to arrive at a reasonable definition the whole trade had been consulted. A large proportion of those engaged in it desired that "net" books should not be sold secondhand within twelve months, but there was absolute unanimity among publishers and book-sellers that six months was the irreducible minimum. The Book Club alone refused to accept this definition, and claimed the right to fix the time at any point it pleased, and to sell secondhand books when it liked and at what price it liked. The Association maintained that the Book Club was selling books which were not bona fide secondhand, but which were artificially made secondhand, not by fair wear and tear, but by the capricious fiat of the Book Club. For example, Mr. Moberly Bell had stated, three days after the book was published, that Mr. Bram Stoker's "Irving" would be sold for 20s. instead of 25s. at the end of a week. The Publishers' Association maintained that *The Times*, offering a bonus, must pay for the bonus.

If *The Times* wishes to attract new subscribers by giving them something for nothing, it must be prepared to sacrifice the advantage of receiving discounts which are allowed to the bookseller who buys to sell at a profit. *The Times* Book Club has proved itself by this action not to be a *bona fide* bookseller, and it has demonstrated that the secondhand books it offers for sale are not *bona fide* secondhand books.

A flood of letters endorsing its action, was received by *The Times* from subscribers to the Library and from other readers. An address prepared by Mr. Henniker Heaton was signed by some 10,000 people. But the publishers' refusal to supply books except upon their own terms blocked the Club's ordinary channels of supply. The Library could provide only a very inadequate selection of the books published week by week, and those that it was able to furnish could be obtained indirectly and more or less surreptitiously. Two or three publishers had in the beginning made an agreement with the Library for the supply of books for a period, and carried out the terms of that contract until its expiration. Such an agreement had been made also with Messrs. Simpkin Marshall and Co., the wholesale booksellers, who, by an accidental failure to give notice of termination at the proper time, were obliged to continue for a while, as one source of supply. Newsagents and amateur booksellers also found profit in buying for resale to the Book Club, which also purchased books it needed in not inconsiderable numbers from booksellers on the Continent. The results, however, were far from satisfactory. In fact the Book Club's promises and the hopes of early days therefore were not and could not be fulfilled.

In reviewing new books ("We are bound to do it," said Moberly Bell, "or we should be departing from the traditions of *The Times*"), the Editor of the *Literary Supplement* inserted a note stating that

the publishers of this book decline to supply *The Times* Book Club with copies on ordinary trade terms, and subscribers who would co-operate with *The Times* to defeat the Publishers' Trust may effectively do so by refraining from ordering the book so far as possible until it is included in *The Times* monthly catalogue.

The Library carried on as best it could.

An interesting announcement appeared to the effect that Mr. Bernard Shaw had himself issued an edition for *The Times* Book Club of "John Bull's Other Island; Major Barbara; and How He Lied to Her Husband".

In the issuing of this long-looked-for volume of plays Mr. George Bernard Shaw has supported, in a most practical manner, his expressed opinions as to the merits of the dispute between *The Times*, network and the Publishers' Trust. His publishers, persisting in their boycott of *The Times*, refused his request that they should supply the book to the Book Club. Mr. Shaw accordingly took the matter in his own hands and himself issued an edition for *The Times*, bearing on the title page the imprint "This edition is issued by the author for *The Times* Book Club".

The next incident of any importance was the publication by Mr. John Murray in the autumn of 1907 of "The Letters of Queen Victoria," in three volumes, at three guineas. Though supplies could not be bought from the publisher in the usual way, a small number of copies was obtained and circulated by the Library. In a review of the book, The Times commented on the high price at which it had been published. More serious references to the price was made later in a letter to the Editor signed "Artifex". Mr. Murray brought an action for libel against The Times in which he afterwards obtained a verdict and was awarded damages of £7,500. At the beginning of October, 1908, there appeared, in The Times (and in the other morning journals) an announcement, occupying a full page in large type, that

The King, being aware of the great interest taken by the Nation in general in the "Letters of Queen Victoria" recently published, has commanded that a new and popular edition should be brought within reach of all His Majesty's subjects. This edition will be in three volumes crown 8vo., and will contain 16 illustrations, as well as the complete text of the larger work carefully revised; it will be sold at 6s. net, bound in red cloth. It will be published by Mr. Murray in conjunction with The Times. The book will be obtainable at all booksellers, including The Times Book Club.

A leading article in the same issue expressed the opinion that "this gracious and timely act of His Majesty" would be welcomed with gratitude and appreciation, and proceeded to say that, for its adequate appreciation, this book—a manual in the art of government as practised by the greatest statesmen of Queen Victoria's earlier days—demanded the study that comes only of possession. "The opportunity then denied" (at three guineas) "to all but the privileged and fortunate is now to be afforded to all by the King's sympathetic insight into the nation's wishes and feeling in the matter. The new edition to be issued under our auspices in conjunction with Mr. Murray, is to be sold at 6s. for the three volumes". Moberly Bell would have rejoiced to read in Mr. Charles Morgan's The House of Macmillan, 1843-1943 (London 1943) an acknowledgement that more than 100,000 copies of the six shilling edition were sold.

Other publishers' advertisements reappeared in *The Times*. It meant that the Book War was ended. Northcliffe had intervened; an agreement embodying the stipulations of the Net Book Agreement of 1906 was prepared. It was signed by Mr. Moberly Bell on the one side and Mr. Edward Bell on behalf of the Publishers' Association.

Pemberton, Max: Lord Northcliffe. (London [1922].)

Steed, H. Wickham: Through Thirty Years (London, 1924), Vol. II, passim.

Wilson, R. McNair: Doctor's Progress. (London, 1938.) Chapter VIII, "Northcliffe".

[Wilson, Herbert W.]: "Lord Northcliffe." The obituary in The Times, August 14, 1923.

# XV. THE ACCORD WITH RUSSIA

# Manuscript

Wallace's Papers in the Cambridge University Library embody the notes he collected in St. Petersburg for the benefit of his own studies and for the information of Nicolson. The Russian papers are filed in *cahiers* carefully arranged and dated. They range from 1904 to 1910.

The first cahier, dated August, 1904, contains Wallace's review (The Times, July 20, 1904) of Theodor Schiemann, Geschichte Russlands unter Kaiser Nikolaus I: Vol. I, Kaiser Alexander I. und die Ergebnisse seiner Lebensarbeit; a cutting and some notes on the part played by Admiral Alexeieff in warning the Czar in 1903 concerning Japanese plans against Korea. (See The Times, June 3, 1905.)

[2] Cahier, dated October 2 to November 21, 1905, "The Russian Revolutionary Movement. Some Important Facts and Dates taken from despatches."

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- [3] Cahier, undated, "Outline sketch of the Revolutionary Movement and digest of an article in Russkoe Duelo, November 23, 1905".
- [4] Cahier, undated "The Revolutionary Movement among the Working Classes". Includes digests of certain pamphlets on the aims and tactics of the Social Revolutionary Party. "The S.Rs. are undoubtedly the soul and brain of the Revolutionary as distinguished from the Reform movement, and since my arrival in St. Petersburg I have been trying to discover what part they have played in recent events, and what their intentions are for the immediate future." Refers to V. Tchernof, Past and Present, 1906, as a source "accidentally" of much information and gives a digest.
- [5] Cahier, dated August 1, 1906, "The Duma," i.e., a Who's Who of the Duma, endorsed "from Notes by Mr. Pares".
- [6] Cahier, dated November 4, 1906, "The Revolutionary Movement among the Students". Wallace describes as "general" the opinion that while the revolutionary movement among the workers had subsided it was as strong as ever among the students. He traces the origin of the movement to the scientific attitude of the XIX century. He chronicles the repression under Alexander III (1881-1894), after which the movement seemed to be at an end. Appearances were deceptive. After a few years the movement began afresh with the activities of exiles who had settled in Switzerland and had there made the acquaintance of the Social Revolutionaries of Western Europe. While shifting to more practical ground the movement did not lose its essentially academic character and nearly ten years were spent in discussing the abstract doctrines of scientific socialism as expounded by Marx and Engels. Not until 1894 was a serious attempt made to put Social Democratic ideas into practice and students, more practical than their predecessors, acted as strike leaders. This first part concludes with the programme of the Revolutionary Students' Association, and Wallace's observations upon it. Part II of this cahier consists of a recapitulation of student activities, names of societies and outlines of tactics covering the years 1899-1906.
- [7] Cahier, dated April 21, 1907, "The Social Democrats, the Bolsheviki and the Mensheviki". History of the party from 1898. The memorandum deals (ff. 1-12) at length with the party split in 1903 and with the definition of party membership; Martov's definition; Lenin's motion in favour of a definition requiring every member of the party to be active personally in one of the party organizations. Centralization was to be the result with extensive powers going to the Central Committee. Story of the quarrel between the contributors to Iskra; Plekhanov and Lenin; account of activities in 1904. Disputes between Mensheviki and Bolsheviki regarding agitation in the Zemstvos. The Bolshevik policy at the IV Congress described in detail: Notes on the controversy between the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks regarding the doctrine of Dictatorship of the Proletariat.
- [8] Cahier, dated March 1, 1907, "The Social Democratic Party". Account of the 1906 Stockholm conferences based upon newspaper sources such as Slovo, Russ; the Bolshevik faction's policy of hostility to the Cadets. Lenin's statement:

We must put forward our own Social Democratic projects, which are not Liberal or Bourgeois, and which are written in revolutionary language, not at all in the style of the Chancellery, and we must insist on having them submitted to the vote. Let the Black Hundred and the Cadets reject them. We shall then proceed to the merciless criticism of the projects of the Cadets and expose their pseudo-democratism.

Upon this Wallace observes that "Mr. Lenin perceives that such tactics make it impossible to have the leadership of the other left groups, but this does not alarm him. He thinks that the party must advance on its own revolutionary path without seeking permanent allies, and takes for his slogan: Go alone and fight in company'"; General expropriation demands of Martov, Trotsky, Pozhkof, Lenin, Groman, i.e., by both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks. Wallace's observations on general development of scientific socialist thought and on Marx's ideas; the peasantry and the proletariat. Report of Slovo May 4-17, 1907, on London Congress, and other press-cuttings on the same and statement of the situation. On Monday April 31, when congress opened, Lenin proposed for the Praesidium receives votes of Bolsheviks, Poles and Letts; Menshevik protest at election of Lenin.

- [9] Cahier, undated. Social Democratic organization in St. Petersburg, as it was in 1905, reviewed by Wallace; Revolutionary Ideas and Tactics in May, 1907; bibliography; Dan's pamphlet on the S.D. Party in Russia, 1900-1904, summarized and reviewed; Economism and Marxism; Bernstein; Iskra; Summary and Review of Parvus' pamphlet; Parvus' letter to Lenin dated November 19 (December 2), 1904; Collection of Revolutionary Proclamation by Anarchists (8) Maximalists (3) S.Rs. (10), S.Ds. (12) Military Organizations (17) Polish Socialist Party (3) given to Wallace by Stolypin, June, 1907.
- [10] Cahier, dated St. Petersburg, May 20, 1907, "London Congress of Russian Social Democrats," General memo describing the schism of Mensheviks and Bolsheviks endorsed in red ink, "In 269, F.O.".

[11] Cahier, dated St. Petersburg, April, 1910, "Russian Foreign Policy, 1908-1910 gh Notes". Anno 1909 Dreams of vast Asiatic Empire dispelled; return to old Rough Notes" traditional policy in S.E. Europe; First thing to be done: liquidation of Far Eastern question by agreements with Japan and England; Second thing to be done: To re-establish Rumania's position in Europe. Situation at end of 1907. Isvolsky's aims: (1) to restrict understanding with Great Britain to subjects in the convention; (2) to conciliate Germany; (3) to make a rapprochement with Austria; (4) to devote Russia's chief efforts to S.E. Europe, Isvolsky's favourite field of action. Favourable conditions: close entente with Central Powers facilitated by Schön and Aehrenthal; Miscalculations: Public opinion in Russia, Real aims of Austria-Hungary; Consequence: Gravitation towards Western Powers so far as S.E. Europe was concerned. Wallace's understanding of the course of events since August and September: at Carlsbad, Isvolsky accepts Berchtold's invitation to Buchlau, where he was informed that Austria-Hungary contemplated annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and replies that Russia would not regard it as a casus belli. Compensation for Russia mentioned (the letter to Paris on Bulgarian Independence, &c.); Isvolsky surprised to find that he is severely condemned by Russian public opinion not only for consenting to the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina but for putting forward the idea of compensation in Dardanelles. Passage for Russia alone could not be expected, and passage for all the Powers would be worse than existing arrangements. Wallace's Kalendar of the antecedents of the Conference. October 28, 1908. Isvolsky returns to St. Petersburg with the conviction that Austria-Hungary has the unreserved backing of Germany, and on October 30 writes to Berchtold about a conference. November 17, Isvolsky informed that Austria-Hungary cannot admit discussion of annexation at a conference. December 25, Isvolsky's speech to the Duma. January, 1909, Austria-Hungary and Turkey come to agreement but relations still strained between Dual Monarchy, Montenegro and between Turkey and Bulgaria; Russian prestige at stake, Isvolsky at his wits end, Germany striving to detach Russia from the Western Powers; the Powers well disposed towards Russia but not likely to lend her effective aid in the event of a serious conflict with Austria and Germany; public opinion in Russia protesting loudly against surrender to Austria, yet not admitting the possibility of going to war. Isvolsky's only course to urge Serbia to submit because Austria-Hungary refused to moderate her demands, and Germany would not put pressure on the Dual Monarchy. March 22, Isvolsky receives from German Ambassador a "mise en demeure péremptoire" to the effect that Russia should declare clearly at once that if Austria requested the Powers to agree to the suppression of Article 25 of the Berlin Treaty, she would also consent. If Russia did not give her consent, Germany would allow events to take their course. The German Ambassador gave it to be understood that if Russia refused or gave an "evasive" reply Germany to "lancer l'Autriche en la Serbe". The Russians had to choose between immediate compliance and an Austrian invasion of Serbia. After some hours of deliberation the Council of Ministers, in order to avoid war, decided to comply with the German demand. Apparently Germany wished to show that the understanding between Russia and the Western Powers was of no avail in a moment of crisis and that she dominated the situation. As soon as this démarche became known in Russia, it provoked intense indignation against Berlin and Vienna, and partly against Isvolsky, who was blamed for not consulting France and England.

#### Printed

Chirol, Valentine: Fifty Years in a Changing World. (London, 1927.)

See Chapter XVI for the account (in Chirol's dramatic style) of his meeting with the American President. Japan's "amazing victories nevertheless took many even of her friends by surprise, and amongst them President Roosevelt. In October. 1904, he sent me a message through our mutual friend, Cecil Spring Rice, to the effect that he wanted me to go over and see him at Washington". (See Gwynn, infra.) He was cordial and "with a boisterous laugh and his teeth gleaming at Chirol" said "I believe you are the godfather of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and I congratulate you". In three hours' discussion the President did most of the talking, "though he did not take it amiss when I sometimes had to interrupt him, as for instance when he spoke of the Pacific as 'our ocean,' and remind him that it contained amongst others some very large islands, such as Australia and New Zealand which were not American". Although the President had started the conversation by saying: "This war has got to be stopped, and *The Times* has got to help me to stop it," he concluded with almost equal emphasis: "Well, sir, I guess they must be left to fight it out—like the Kilkenny cats!" He added "What I want to know is whether, when the time comes and I can do something to bring Russia and Japan together and make peace, your people are going to help or are going to back up your Japanese friends in demanding the last pound of Russia's ". (p. 210.) Chirol without hesitation reassured him on that point. "Roosevelt, when I saw him, was evidently obsessed by two conflicting apprehensions. All his sympathies were with the Japanese who had been recklessly provoked to war by Russia's aggressive policy for years past in the Far East." The President gave Chirol

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his reasons, domestic and economic, why the restoration of peace in the Far East was an American interest of the first order. The future of China was much in his thoughts. "America wanted a strong and peaceful China for her trade, and not for her trade only. If Russia had been a danger to China there might be danger also if Japan's victory led to a Japanese over-lordship." Replying to Chirol, Roosevelt said that the Pacific was a very large ocean. "But we don't want the Japanese to come trailing their men-of-war right across our ocean, and if they did we don't want the Anglo-Japanese Alliance to intrude itself between them and us." (p. 212.) He was rather puzzled, Chirol says, by the opposite views held by my old chief, Mackenzie Wallace, and by Morrison of Peking, who were sent to represent The Times during the Washington Peace Conference and had respectively rather strong leanings, the former towards Russia and the latter towards Japan. "He conveyed to me afterwards a friendly message to the effect that they had both been very useful in promoting a peaceful settlement." (Cf. Gwynn, infra.)

Fort, G. Seymour: Alfred Beit. (London, 1932.)

An account of Beit's intervention in international politics and his visits to Rouvier and the Kaiser are chronicled at pp. 179 ff. and the visit to Esher at p. 184. "Although Prince von Bülow has published the German Emperor's version of this interview, Lord Esher never published what Beit told him, and Beit's version of the very remarkable meeting must for ever remain unknown." It was later published in the Esher Papers as noted above.

Gooch, G. P.: Before the War: Studies in Diplomacy, II. (London, 1938.)

For the Russian rapprochement with England see Chapter, IV, "Sazonoff," pp. 289-370, which was written after the publication of the statesman's own story, and is valuable. Compare Vol. I, Chapter IV, "Isvolsky" (pp. 285-364).

Griswold, A. Whitney: The Far Eastern Policy of the United States. (New York, 1938.)

The author deals (p. 111) with Chirol's meeting with Roosevelt and has had access to the papers of William W. Rockhill, American Ambassador to Peking and later to St. Petersburg, with whom Chirol had an extensive correspondence. (See p. 162.)

Gwynn, Stephen: The Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring Rice. (2 vols., Constable, London, 1930.)

As British Ambassador to Washington, Spring Rice wrote, during November or December, 1904 (i.e., at the time of Roosevelt's election to the Presidency and the Dogger Bank incident), a letter of introduction to President Roosevelt on behalf of Valentine Chirol. The letter emphasised the support given by *The Times* to the United States in the Spanish-American War—when there had been some fear of another attitude. Spring Rice proceeded to tell the President that:

Chirol fought like a demon. I saw a good deal of him at the time and can assure you of it at first hand; and there was never any doubt as to which side *The Times* took. I don't mean that this did *you* any good. I mean and hope that it will do him good. Since then (and before, too) he has been a great traveller, has written the best small book on China, and the best large or small one on Persia. He is the best informed man on European questions, especially German questions (he lived in Berlin for some years) whom I know. His influence is supreme in *The Times*, when *The Times* has time to think. He is as intimate in the Foreign Office as anyone can be, and absolutely trusted. He would certainly be the best person to convey to that thick-headed institution his impressions of America; and as he can always apply to the Government the argument of *fear*, he is sure to be listened to. No one there wants to have *The Times* on his back. I don't think anyone by experience or position could be a better tube to speak through, either to the Government or to the country. Also, as I am very particularly fond of him I should like him to know the man who occupies the first position in the world and is the best suited for it. You see, flattery haunts the steps of thrones, but mine is of old standing.

Mr. Gwynn admits that this bringing together was not wholly a success. "Chirol wrote his disappointment. He had not been able to fix Roosevelt continuously in discussion." (Vol. I, pp. 436-7.) (Cf. Chirol, above.)

Knaplund, Paul: Speeches on Foreign Affairs, 1904-1914, by Sir Edward Grey. (London, 1931.)

Provides the text of the Foreign Secretary's speeches on the negotiations with Russia, 1907; the visit of King Edward to the Czar, 1908; Persia, 1909-1912.

Nicolson, Harold: Lord Carnock. (London, 1930.)

Account of the negotiations with Russia and Wallace's visit to St. Petersburg in 1906-1907 (pp. 212 ff.). (Cf. Wallace in "Manuscript Sources," above.)

Schmitt, Bernadotte E: The Annexation of Bosnia. (Cambridge, 1937.)

A thoroughly documented account of the preliminaries and the immediate consequences of the annexation. References to Bourchier, p. 32: Chirol, p. 75; Steed, pp. 13, 16, 33, 197, 209.

# XVII. THE TIMES PURCHASED BY "X"

A report that "Germany," aware that the copyright of *The Times* was for sale, had determined to secure control by providing the money for one of the groups of small proprietors, became current after the transfer had taken place. Messrs. Koch and Speyer, Miss Brodie-Hall's friends, were certainly in touch with the Wiener Credit-Anstalt, but there is no evidence that Berlin was interested in acquiring direct journalistic influence in London. Paul von Schwabach (for whom see p. 830) as early as January, 1900 (*Aus meinen Akten*, p. 132), reported to Sir Eyre Crowe that he had heard talk of some projected reorganization at Printing House Square on the basis of money found by "Lord B [?] and Lord R[othschild]." Schwabach proceeded:

Although it was merely in the form of rumours that I heard of this matter. I had, nevertheless, the impression that for English people, and particularly for those interested in Press affairs, all this happened quite openly. Furthermore, it was quite obvious to me that people like B. and R. (the latter being by no means particularly pro-German) would not dream of allowing German influence on the paper. Neither could I imagine how this influence should be exercised—in no case, certainly, by financial means. For if the gentlemen mentioned above take a financial interest at all in an enterprise, they will no doubt see to it that sufficient capital is available.

But I could not refrain from enquiring in authoritative quarters, and this is what I found out: somebody suggested, some weeks ago, to the German Embassy in London the idea of securing influence on a daily paper published in London. This suggestion was turned down. Nevertheless, as a consequence of the relevant report, instructions have been sent by the Foreign Office to the Embassy distinctly requesting that the Embassy take no hand at all in such matters. This is by no means a phrase; I have seen the report and the draft of the instruction with my own eyes. I have therefore reason to assume that the rumour you have heard is based on erroneous surmises. I think you would do well to contradict, at your office, such allegations should opportunity arise.

Here the matter may be left. Official Germany was not interested. Rather, as the text below a cartoon headed "Die Versteigerung der Times" in Simplicissmus (March 16, 1908) indicates, the way the Germans sought to put it was: Sie sehen. gute alte Tante Times, man ist leichter käuflich, als verkäuflich = The Times, as an old spinster, on the auctioneer's platform, displays all charms, but no bidder shows any interest.

Stumm's report of July 9, 1908 (G.P. XXIV, p. 88), of the competition of German paper-mills as the reason for Walter's anti-German attitude and purports to record views current in English circles. This is obvious nonsense. There is no evidence whatsoever that Walter entertained any dislike of Germany or that he wished to influence the editorial politics of The Times in an anti-German direction. Nor is the existence of Stumm's "reason" in any of the memoirs of the period confirmed. The Walter family had taken no interest in paper-making since the 'seventies.

# XVIII. NORTHCLIFFE

Manuscript

Northcliffe Papers.

Extracts from the diary of Harold Child.

Printed

Blumenfeld, R. D.: "Lord Northcliffe" in *The Post Victorians* (London, 1933), pp 427-442.

Clarke, Tom: My Northcliffe Diary. (London, 1931.)

Dawson, Geoffrey: "Harmsworth, Alfred Charles William," in the Dictionary of National Biography, Supplement for 1922-1930, p. 397.

Fyfe, Hamilton: Northcliffe. (London, 1930.)

Hammerton, J. A.: With Northcliffe in Fleet Street. (London, 1932.)

Harmsworth, Alfred: Motors and Motor Driving. (London, 1902.)

Slight historical sketch, followed by detailed technical information on petrol engines, exhaust valves, &c., and an appendix on automobile literature and the motor laws. One chapter only by Harmsworth: "The Choice of a Motor," the rest supplied by various contributors.

Lawrence, Arthur: Journalism as a Profession, with a chapter by Alfred C. Harmsworth and a preface by W. Robertson Nicoll. (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1903.)

Gives straightforward advice on scope, markets, style, &c. Liveliest chapter is the last, Chapter X, by Harmsworth, entitled "The Making of a Newspaper," which

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provides a brief, pithy description of the development of the new journalism and its financial rewards. "Few vocations afford better opportunity for the investment of brain than newspaper-making." Stresses the growing political power of the Press: "Every extension of the franchise renders more powerful the newspaper and less powerful the politician. Hence the great responsibility of the newspaper owner and his staff." Aspirants to journalism are recommended to get the best possible education (preferably at a public school), spend a year at a university, then travel, and finally begin as reporters. Harmsworth suggests that the next few years will see great developments in journalism, notably in the growth of specialist newspapers and that "It may be quite possible in the next few years to print photographs really well in a morning newspaper". He refers to difficulty of a newspaper proprietor keeping his independence and avoiding entanglement with politicians or financiers.

# XX. DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN DISCORDS

Anglo-German Courier, Vol. I, January 6-July, 1906. Conducted by Leo Weinthal.

The motto displayed in the heading of the paper is extracted from J. A. Spender's article in the *Fortnightly Review* of November, 1905, on the need to remove Anglo-German misunderstanding.

The first issue contains a Report of "Mr. Alfred Beit in Berlin," reprinted from the African World, December 30, 1905, and Berliner Tageblatt, December 31, 1905. The issue of January 20 criticises the general attitude of The Times, towards Germany; February 10 contains a notice of Edmund Davis' stay in Berlin, during which he saw the Kaiser; February 16: W. T. Stead on an interchange of groups of journalists; March 2: the suggestion is followed up. "It would form the subject of an interesting competition... best list of influential journals and journalists in Germany and Britain... who for instance is the most influential journalist of The Times? Mr. Buckle, Mr. Moberly Bell, or from an international point of view, Mr. Chirol, or from a German point of view, Mr. George Saunders of Berlin?"; June 28: Alfred de Rothschild's select reception to the German editors. There were present Arthur Walter, Count Eckardstein, Sir Ernest Cassel, Sir Julius Wernher, Moberly Bell, J. A. Spender; June 28: July 13: Stead's account of the general Press reception, at which the absence of The Times is noticed. Stead on the notion of The Times that the "German editors are mere puppets of the Emperor ludicrously absurd". When Beit died in July, 1906 the Courier ceased.

Chirol, Sir Valentine: Fifty years in a Changing World. (London, 1927.)

A generous tribute to Holstein occurs on p. 269:

He had his faults and made many enemies, but the better I came to know the political world of Berlin, the more I respected him for the possession of sterling qualities that grew exceedingly rare during William II's reign. He was almost morbidly suspicious, and he could be a good hater, like Bismarck, with whom he had served a long and close apprenticeship. His methods were doubtless often unscrupulous and tortuous, but not more so than the Court camarilla, with whom he was constantly at grips. . . he believed himself to be the repository of the old traditions of German foreign policy in the best days of the great Chancellor. In an atmosphere of gross adulation and servility he preserved an independence of character and showed a contempt for stars, and ribands and plumed helmets, which were proof against all blandishments from the highest quarters.

For remarks on the difficulties in reconciling Chirol's account (pp. 287 ff.) of his visit in 1901 to Berlin and interview with Holstein with the documents, see p. 810.

Eckardstein, Freiherr Hermann von: Lebenserinnerungen und politische Denkwürdigkeiten. (2 vols., Leipzig, 1920.)

[Chirol, Sir Valentine] review of above in *The Times Literary Supplement*, September 9, 1920.

Steed, Henry Wickham: The Hapsburg Monarchy. (London, second edition, 1914.)

Through Thirty Years. (2 vols.; London 1924.)

Steed's attitude towards Austria-Hungary was that of an Englishman whose view of the Empire was conditioned primarily by her political relation to Germany. So long, at least, as William II was the German Emperor, a common foreign policy between Germany and Austria must increase the danger for Britain. In addition, Steed, as an English Protestant individualist. nourished an inveterate suspicion of Internationa I Jewry, above all, the German Jews; and of the Catholic Church, above all, the Jesuits. He enjoyed a "Protestant inclination" which he claims with particular pride. (Through Thirty Years, I, p. 11.) The Jews and the Jesuits were, besides the Army and the Civil Service, the strongest champions of the Austro-Hungarian unity. Steed was convinced

that "Despite their many admirable qualities and exemplary discipline, the Jesuits . bear a strong resemblance to the Jews". (The Hapsburg Monarchy, p. 109.) His political objection to the Austrian Jesuits was that they were often not Austrians, but Germans, his personal objection was that they fostered talent rather than character, efficiency rather than individuality, and these in the service of an international Church to the "subordination of local patriotic considerations". It followed that Steed had little sympathy for the Clerical Party's efforts to reconcile the Catholic Poles, the Catholic Croats, and the Ruthenian Greek-Uniats. The dual system of 1867, gave the Germans the upper hand in Austria, and the Magyars power in Hungary, to the detriment of the Slav peoples in either half of the monarchy. Francis Ferdinand's idea of a re-division of the Habsburg Empire on federal lines, i.e., with Germans, Magyars and Slavs as masters in their respective States, might conceivably have saved not only the Habsburg dynasty, but the political and economic union of the Danube basin. historic fact that Austria-Hungary grew up as the bulwark of European and Christian civilization against the Turks and, in the 19th century, against the Russians; and that the defence and maintenance of Western civilization and Catholic Christendom against Asiatic and Islamic barbarism and Orthodoxy, meant no more to the successor of Lavino as The Times correspondent at Vienna than to any other representative of his nation, his generation, his Protestantism, and his newspaper. In 1905, when Steed had been three years in Vienna, he was asked to undertake for The Times a full-length obituary of the Emperor Francis Joseph. He made the close analysis of the dynastic, economic and racial factors which underlay the structure of the Austro-Hungarian state and which he described in greater detail in The Hapsburg Monarchy. Steed's ideas became much more definite as the result of this series of studies which he began in 1905, and his interest in the Slav question deepened after 1907. He was at this time and until the war a supporter of the territorial integrity of the Empire. The Correspondent (1) believed the continued existence of the Monarchy to be of advantage to Europe (2) hoped that the Monarchy would remain a stronger element than either the Austrian Germans, the Magyars, the Jews or the Church, (3) wished it to gather the strength to pursue a foreign policy independent of Germany. Steed's The Hapsburg Monarchy presents an account that was admitted by opponents of its standpoint to be inclusive, sagacious and accurate.

The general relations of Britain and Austria-Hungary before 1908 had not been unfriendly. The Austrian attitude towards England even during the Boer War was not conspicuously hostile. There had even been complaints in the German Press that the Press-Bureau in Vienna used The Times, via its Vienna Correspondent, to make mischief against Germany—so keenly resented in Berlin was the slightest sign of an independent foreign policy at Vienna. From the only available Austrian paper in the British Museum, the file of Neue Freie Presse, it appears that feeling in Austria was anti-English after hostility of England to the annexation of Bosnia had become obvious. King Edward VII's discussion with the Emperor Francis Joseph in Ischl was not yet known to the public and, therefore, the change in British policy and opinion could be put forward in the Neue Freie Presse as due solely to the Bosnian affair. During the first stage of the crisis, the Vienna Press prints almost daily extracts from unfriendly English sources; and numerous leading articles deal with "anti-Austrian agitation" in England, and The Times is charged with playing a conspicuous part.

The Austrian Press took care to suggest that the campaign of 1909 was begun in England. The British Foreign Office held that it was the Austrian Press that originated the Press-polemic. Metternich's report (January 7, 1909, G.P. XXVI, p. 393) shows that he was annoyed:

... The original, vehemently anti-Austrian attitude has, for some time, become much more moderate. That also applies to English public opinion, and even the English Press which, at the beginning, had agitated against Austria, and, in its polemic, distorted the facts unjustifiably, is now more moderate. Originally, The Times and other papers suspected Germany behind Austria's action, partly because that is the fashion nowadays, partly not to miss the opportunity to hit at us, partly because it was not so far-fetched an idea that an important step like this could have been undertaken without previously consulting the German ally. The original attempt of the London Press to brand Germany as an accomplice may have contributed to intensify the campaign against Austria. But these attacks have ceased for a long time. . . .

Sir Charles Hardinge complained lately to me about the attacks of the Austrian Press against Great Britain which he claimed to be unjustified. I replied that one could by no means be surprised about it considering the reckless attacks of the English Press, headed by The Times, against Austria. When he denied that, I said that it was characteristic of his fellow countrymen to be blind to the fact that it was not exclusively the other party who was guilty. Did he believe, I asked that a country which, like Austria, had had, from olden times, the most friendly feelings towards England, would get utterly excited against England suddenly and without any reason? He did not answer that question. . . .

When, too. Hardinge repeated his complaint to the Austrian Ambassador, Aehrenthal's instructions for the reply (January 12, 1909, Oesterr. Urk. I, No. 881, p. 733)

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are stronger in expression than Metternich's. Aehrenthal blames particularly the Vienna Correspondents of *The Times* and the *Morning Post*. Perhaps when Aehrenthal wrote this dispatch, he had already seen Forgach's report of his conversation with Gordon Browne (*Oesterr. Urk.* I. No. 870, p. 726) according to which the London Press campaign had been ordered and directed by Grey himself:

Forgach's report, dated January 10, 1909, Belgrade, says:

who, in some days' time, is proceeding to Constantinople—stayed here. Mr. Browne came to see me several times; we discussed the very anti-Austrian attitude of the Press, and I said that in my belief, the papers did not represent true English opinion, but must needs have an unfavourable influence on it. Mr. Browne admitted in confidence that the Press campaign had been launched at a mot d'ordre of the Foreign Office after the annexation. . . Much was to be explained by Sir Edward Grey's strange character. The Secretary of State, he said, was bent on the idea that we had broken the Treaty of Berlin, and was morally indignant at that. He therefore had given instructions to make things as uncomfortable as possible for Austria, in order to discourage us, and all who would like to follow our example, from disregarding international agreements signed by Great Britain. According to him, that is also the reason of the great animosity shown in England against Your Excellency personally.

In the Neue Freie Presse from mid-December, 1908, onwards, there are hardly any comments on the English Press or Great Britain. No notice was taken in that journal of Steed's criticism of Aehrenthal in October, 1909 (which is referred to in Oesterr. Urk., November 3, 1909, II, No. 1782, p. 516.) Tyrrell's reply (l.c. No. 1800, p. 561) suggests a difference of opinion between the Editor of The Times and Steed. Unlike the reply usually given to the Germans when they complained, namely, that the Government had no means to influence The Times, Tyrrell promised to do something. Doubtless his

intimacy with Chirol would provide the opportunity to say a word.

In the autumn of 1909 a British publicist stated that "The Times divulged the awkward fact that M. Isvolsky, the October protector of Bosnia, was the June seller of Bosnia to Austria-Hungary, having on June 18th offered the two provinces to Baron von Aehrenthal. Well might the Anglophil Russian Minister exclaim 'Et tu Brute'". (pp. 777-8.) The controversy had been stirred into existence by Steed's long article entitled "The Passing of the 'Status Quo'," published in The Times of August 11. It had mentioned the existence of the aide-mémoire of June 19, 1908, in which Isvolsky alluded to the possibility that Russia might agree to the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in return for the passage of Russian warships through the Dardanelles. The revelation, made first in The Times, had been employed by Friedjung and others to discredit Isvolsky. The result was the appearance in the Fortnightly Review of an article by Prince Demidoff, of the Russian Embassy in Vienna, under the pseudonym of "Vox et praeterea nihil" defending Isvolsky and attacking Aehrenthal. Reply was made in Aehrenthal's behalf by "Vox alterae partis" who in one passage made use of the remark "Well might the Anglophil Russian Minister exclaim to The Times 'Et tu Brute'." This naturally drew a retort from Steed, whose dispatch from Vienna of November 10 ran to a length of nearly 4,000 words. He saw, below the surface of the controversy between the two men, one more attempt on the part of Aehrenthal to make Isvolsky pay for the Anglo-Russian agreement. The controversy itself turned upon the proceedings at Buchlau and the bona fides of the two Statesmen. Steed, after an exegetical account of the aide-memoire, emphasised that points would be settled by publication, which would not be objected to by Aehrenthal, for "It may be unsatisfactory that, as the Austro-Hungarian semi-official Press seems to suggest, Turkey should be the only State, except Russia and Austria-Hungary, to have full cognizance of the aide-mémoire". What, however, was more unsatisfactory still was "this perennial duel in the dark". The organs of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office should not be in a position to pursue their efforts against the Anglo-Russian agreement. One such effort, made so recently as the Monday previous to writing, was the insinuation that if Isvolsky failed to receive the stipulated recompense for his assent to the annexation, his disappointment must be due to "lack of unselfishness" on the part of England.

In a long dispatch from Vienna dated November 10 and printed on November 12, The Times correspondent dealt with the writer in the Fortnightly Review, "whose utterances reveal so radical a misconception of the main functions of independent journalism". What was known of the aide-mémoire was then set forth in view of the fact that the statements regarding it in the article of August 11 had nowhere been impugned. As the leading article of The Times for November 13 said, what had appeared in the sober pages of an English monthly had now passed into the columns of the Austrian and Russian Press. "When both the Russian and the Austro-Hungarian Ministers of Foreign

<sup>1</sup> Fortnightly Review, September, 1909, pp. 383-401; M. Isvolsky and Count von Aehrenthal: A Rectification by Vox Alterae Partis [Dr. E. J. Dillon]. [Ibid., November, 1909, pp. 777-789.]

Affairs have been induced to take a personal and direct part in such a controversy, it is of course impossible to ignore it." The article recommended discretion as "Statesmen in such responsible positions have much higher interests to serve, and those interests are assuredly not served by a public display of antagonism which cannot alter the hard facts of the European situation". The "duel" was not to be so easily called off. Repeated assertions, it was hoped in Vienna, that Isvolsky had beforehand agreed to the annexation could not but harm his position in Russia as well as in Europe as a whole.

# XXII. THE EUROPEAN EQUILIBRIUM 1909-1912

Askew, William C.: Europe and Italy's Acquisition of Libya, 1911-12. (Durham, N.C., 1942.)

This political and diplomatic study by a pupil of Prof. E. M. Carroll traces, incidentally, the reactions of world opinion as shown in *The Times* and other leading European journals.

Brett, Maurice V.: Journals and Letters of Reginald Viscount Esher. (3 vols., London, 1934.)

Lord Esher's memorandum to the King on his visit to Alfred Beit who "wished to speak to me about his Audience at Potsdam" occurs also at pp. 136-9; Vol. II for the arrangements regarding the Committee of Imperial Defence; Buckle, references to Repington at pp. 225, 229-230, 249, 263, 278, 293, 435, 437; for the Tweedmouth Letter, see pp. 293, 295.

Edmonds, Sir James E.: "Repington, Charles à Court (1858-1925)" in the Dictionary of National Biography, 1922-1930.

Harris, Walter Burton: Obituary in The Times, April 5, 1933.

Huguet, Général V. J. M.: L'Intervention Militaire Britannique en 1914. (Paris, 1928.)

The Military attaché to the London Legation describes at p. 13 the French opinion of the British Army ("comme un organe un peu archaīque") and a gradual change to the view that recent improvements in organization would make a difference if and when war should occur between France and Germany. In the autumn of 1905 Huguet decided that Britain could send 150,000 men to the Continent and confirmed from General Grierson that the General Staff were already considering this. Huguet told Cambon, who was deeply impressed not only by the number (he thought 30,000 was the limit) but also by the fact that the War Office was studying the matter. Cambon later obtained Rouvier's permission to open discussion on the subject with the British Government. When reorganized, the British would discuss sending an expeditionary Force of about 100,000; but no real progress was made with the problem until August, 1910, when Sir Henry Wilson became D.M.O. The programme arranged in 1911 was used in 1914.

Mathews, Joseph J.: "Walter Burton Harris" in Journalism Quarterly XVII, 3; pp. 227-231. (Minneapolis, 1940.)

An account of Harris's career based upon his published books, references in diplomatic documents, &c.

How far Harris's "taking up the cudgels" (see p. 827 supra) on behalf of the Union des Mines was caused by his pro-French attitude, or how far it was that British capital played a part in the Union, is not clear from the reports. Morel (Morocco in Diplomacy p. 129, note 2) has it that Harris was one of the founders of the Union. That, in the later part of the year, he also denounced, once or twice, French irregularities with respect to discriminatory treatment of non-French people acquiring property in the French zone (this is mentioned without comments, in the German papers) seems to indicate that he was concerned for British interests. Morel (p. 145) sees in it a sign of Harris's impartiality.

Generally speaking, the German Press does not show much interest in Moroccan affairs before Agadir. For them Morocco, since the German-French agreement of 1909, was more or less a purely French affair. There are, of course, regular reports about the troubles in Morocco and developments of some importance as, for example, the expedition to Fez, but the problem as a whole is more or less of a secondary character. There was a vehement semi-official protest in the Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung of May 5 against the mischievous reports of foreign papers (e.g., Neue Wiener Zeitung) that Germany intended to send warships to Morocco. The Agadir coup appears to have been rather a surprise for the mass of Germans; for there was no Press campaign, so far as the files in London indicate, to prepare public opinion for it. Only in the last two or three days before Agadir there are inconspicuous hints that Germany might have to take steps to protect her nationals in Morocco but the German Ambassador in Paris was not consulted about it. In a summary article published at the end of the year, the Grenzboten, which, like the other periodicals, had reported regularly about the crisis and also alluded to the British Press, commented upon an article in H. W. Massingham's

# THE EUROPEAN EQUILIBRIUM 1909-1912

Nation for December 25, 1911. The Nation article is quoted as saying that The Times article of July 20 had deliberately misrepresented the facts regarding German-French compensation in order to prepare the ground for the British action taken the following day, leaving open the question whether The Times did so in order to force the hands of the British Government or whether the British Foreign Office had inspired the article to create the appropriate atmosphere.

The German historians have little to say about the role of *The Times* during this first stage of the crisis. Monographs about Agadir are conspicuously scarce. Hartung (Berliner Monatshefte, VIII, No. 1, and X, No. 8); Mann, Die Agadirkrisis des Jahres 1911; Kleinknecht, Die englische Politik während der Agadirkrise, only deal with the diplomatic sources. Tardieu, Le Mvstère d'Agadir and Caillaux, Agadir, say nothing about the article in *The Times* of July 20. Kessler, Das deutsch-englische Verhältnis unter Bethmann-Hollweg, excludes the Agadir problem from his study. Wahl in his Deutsche Geschichte (IV, p. 498) finds that "the editors and correspondents of *The Times* mostly launched forth in furious Germanophobia". Weizsäcker who was at the German Foreign Office at the time of the crisis, in an article headed "Zum Marokkostreit" in the Deutsche Revue, Vol. 46 (1921), pp. 197-209, writes that The Times article of July 20 was intended to prepare the British action; and on that occasion he says: "the main reason for Lloyd George's historic action becomes clearly apparent, although the secret background of it still needs investigation. The Times mentions in the article of July 20 that a general reconciliation between France and Germany was planned. If that was so, the balance of power on the continent, so necessary for the earlier British policy, was in danger indeed. The British had given to the French a promissory note only for Morocco and it was not in the British interest to fulfil this obligation too soon." (See also infra, s.v. Repington.)

[Repington, Lt.-Col. C. à C.], Imperial Strategy, by the Military Correspondent of "The Times". (London, 1906.)

The author's articles on the new War Office, the General Staff, Indian Army Affairs. The important article of December 27, on France and Germany is reprinted with others from *The Times* of the year 1905; and from other sources, 1903-1904.

The Foundations of Reform, by the Military Correspondent of "The Times". (London, 1908.)

The correspondent's articles in *The Times* of the years 1906-1908, including those of June 10, 12, 27, and July 8, 1908, on Statecraft and Strategy.

Essays and Criticisms, by the Military Correspondent of "The Times". (London, 1911.

Articles from *The Times* in 1909-1910, including his arguments for Dominion navies and an Imperial Naval General Staff, and the important series of January 23 and 30, February 6 and 20, 1911, on Tendencies in the German Army, the Basis of German Power, Principles of German Strategy, &c.

Repington, Lt.-Col. Charles à Court: Vestigia. (London, 1919.)

Chapters of autobiography in which Repington recounts (Chapter XVII) his early experiences at Printing House Square; Chapter XVIII is a brief account of the military understanding with France which is amplified in his later book.

Repington, Lt.-Col. C. à C.: The First World War, 1914-1918. (London, 1920.)

Chapter I tells the story of Repington's relations with Huguet in 1905.

Lt.-Colonel Charles à Court was educated at Eton and Sandhurst. He resigned from the Army on January 8, 1902, and he began shortly afterwards to write on the South African Campaign for "The Times History of the War" while being retained by The Times to write "independently" on military affairs. (à Court to Bell, December 30, 1901.) In 1903 when he succeeded to an estate he assumed the name of Repington. Bell, rather than Buckle or Chirol, was his supporter, and it was he who was invited to dinner to meet Haldane and a number of representative soldiers. (Repington to Bell, February 19, 1905.) He thus excused to Bell his publishing an "Invasion" article in the National Review because The Times would not accept it.

I thought it right to expose the fallacies of the Blue Water extremists now or never . . . (Buckle, Capper) I am oppressed with the belief that both are not of my way of thinking on the subject and are what I call perverts on the whole subject of Blue Water doctrines. Anyway I have had not one syllable of Editorial support in my campaign on this subject, and it has been a vexation to me, I cannot say it has been a hindrance because I got up a jury consisting of Lords Roberts and Lovat and Sammy Scott, and with the help of Balfour, Lansdowne and Cawdor we forced this Inquiry out of the Government in the teeth of Admiralty opposition. I wanted The Times to have been the lever and to have got the credit, but failing The Times I have got where I wanted without it. (Repington to Bell, December 4, 1907.)

The prospect of war in the Balkans led Repington to address to Bell a statement regarding the development of military thought regarding the freedom of Press reporting in war areas:

The system of Press correspondents with modern armies is in my opinion out of date: its failure in Manchuria despite great expenditure was pronounced. No serious news was, or will be in future allowed through except from countries very low in their development. I suggest that, if it is an object to secure, whether before war breaks out, or afterwards, a constant stream of good information, The Times should resort to secret service on a system which I have applied with success abroad when working under the F.O. If The Times likes to try my system the Manager has only to tell me how much he is prepared to spend a month on this service and I will take the hypothetical case of an Austrian campaign against Servia and Montenegro—with its possible developments with the spring—and give a sketch of the proposed system. It will take about two to three weeks from receipt of instructions to act before this system will produce results. The Editor says his news is doubtful. The official people here make the same complaint about theirs. (Repington to Bell, November 19, 1908.)

During the Agadir crisis (see supra, s. v. Harris) Repington wrote a series of articles which angered certain Germans. Thus Widemann, the naval attaché, to Tirnitz of October 30, 1911 (G.P. Vol. XXXI, p. 15) mentions that, "on the strength of the expert judgment of Repington, the [English] papers agree that the French army is by far superior to the German army"; but he does not draw any consequences from it with regard to the Morocco situation; and Metternich, in his report to Bethmann-Hollweg of November 1 (G.P. Vol. XXXI, pp. 18-23) makes it quite clear that he sees the aim of Repington's articles simply in mischief-making, and not even as an attempt to raise public opinion in Germany in favour of Army reforms at the cost of naval armaments: "one might think, he says, that [The Times] wants to discredit our army in order to flatter the French," but he does not go as far as to establish a connexion with the Morocco affair. Goschen reports a conversation regarding Anglo-German relations and the Press campaign in both countries which he had with Bethmann-Hollweg on November 2 (G. and T. Vol. VII, No. 632, p. 659)—the occasion being British complaints about inaccurate rendering of speeches of British ministers in the German Press. "The Chancellor pointed out that the German Press had no monopoly of misrepresentation. and mentioned . . . more especially the recent articles of The Times respecting the German army"; but neither he nor Kiderlen, with whom Goschen had a rather animated conversation about the same subject on November 3, i.e., the next day (G. and T. VII, No. 661. p. 653) and who also quoted Repington's articles as deliberate mischief-making, connected them with the political situation. The report of Russell, the military attaché at Berlin, writing on November 16 (G. and T. VII, No. 653, p. 645), also describes the publication as most unfortunate, but does not allude to political repercussions.

Papers like the National-Zeitung, the Kölnische Zeitung, the Vossische Zeitung and the Hamburgischer Korrespondent, hardly mention the articles or just pass over them as something which, so far as the criticism of the Army is concerned, is not to be taken seriously. The general attitude of those papers at the time—namely, to avoid anything which might endanger the conclusion of the German-French settlement—may have forbidden the kind of comment which Schiemann twice permitted himself. He wrote in the Kreuz-Zeitung of November 1, 1911 (Deutschland und die grosse Politik, Vol. XI, p. 326) that:

an understanding on the basis of mutual respect of the other party's interests . . . is impossible as long as Great Britain, as a threat against ourselves, maintains the two-power standard, and as long as the British navy is placed at the service of all the enemies of Germany. So far, we have not had an opportunity to state that the point of view of the British Government has changed in this respect; and yet quite recently, while the Morocco negotiations seemed to be at a critical stage, we have seen that *The Times*, to back up the French, depreciated the German army and was supported therein by the *New York Times*. It was the counterpart to the insolent articles of *France Militaire* which left so bitter an after-taste of the Morocco negotiations.

And he comes back to the topic on December 6 (p. 367):

One cannot forget here that the military correspondent of *The Times*, apparently in order to encourage the French to attack Germany, depreciated the German army in every respect, competing therein with the unqualified defamations of the *France Militaire*.

The Schlesische Zeitung, which led in the German provinces of Silesia and Posen, sees a triple purpose in the articles: to back up the French, to weaken German diplomacy and to prevent naval expansion. Lord Acton, the British Minister at Darmstadt, quotes the journal in his report to the Foreign Office of November 20 (G. and T. VII, No. 699, p. 704):

The recent criticisms by The Times Military Correspondent of the German army form the subject of a violent personal attack in the Schlesische Zeitung on

#### BALKAN DANGERS

Colonel Repington, whose family history is related with astonishing accuracy of detail, in order to gauge the amount of credence which may be attached to his written statements. According to the journal, the British critic, who spent only four days with the opposing armies, had a threefold object in view. Firstly, he desired, at that stage of the negotiations, to incite the French to resistance à outrance by holding out a prospect of military success; secondly, by exploding the fable of her invincibility which has won her so many bloodless victories, the critic was endeavouring to diminish German prestige abroad and to weaken the force of her diplomacy; and thirdly, by attributing military imperfections to the lavish expenditure of the navy, the crafty penman, with Printing House Square at his back, wished to warn the guileless electors to the new Reichstag that naval expansion is not in the true interests of a mainland empire and thus to arrest that competition which is so irksome to Great Britain.

It may be noted that both the Kreuz-Zeitung and the Schlesische Zeitung were organs of the Conservative Party and widely read by the landed gentry as the Schlesische Zeitung was by the Army officers stationed in the East. The articles did not pass without criticism in England, since Repington's dual position as Military Correspondent of The Times and Editor of the Army Review was felt to be undesirable. In the House of Commons during the Supply Committee on Army Estimates on March 12, 1912, Mr. Munro Ferguson described Repington as "one who is after all, I suppose, the first military writer in Europe. I doubt whether the case for the Territorial Force [for House of Commons questions regarding Repington's connexion with Haldane see Hansard, February 20, 1912] could have been better put than it has by the military correspondent of The Times." The speaker was followed by Lord Beresford who, "on the question of the editor of the Army Annual," said: "I am not going to blame the editor. I know him very well. He is one of the cleverest men we have got. He is one of the best writers of military history in any country in the world. He is extremely clever, and he would be very valuable in any position in which the Government could employ him. Neither do I blame The Times newspaper. I blame the Government very much for this position. It is a position which is unbearable, and this House should not allow it." He gives his reasons. Repington's article in The Times last October on the German Army irritated and angered the Germans. It was a great danger that the Correspondent of that great paper, regarded abroad as the official organ of the Government, was an official of the War Office. "It should be one thing or the other."

# XXIII. BALKAN DANGERS

## Manuscript

Correspondence between J. D. Bourchier, Bell and Wickham Steed covering years 1895 to 1920; Mme. Take Jonescu to Wallace (1891-1897); Clive Bigham to Bell, 1897.

#### Printed

Bourchier, James David.

Articles on Albania, Bulgaria, Crete, Greece, Macedonia, in Encyclopaedia Britannica, 10th edition, 1902-1903.

The Bulgarian Peace Treaty, speeches delivered in the British Parliament with an introduction by J. D. Bourchier (London) [1920].

Grogan, Lady: Life of J. D. Bourchier. (London, 1926.)

Draws extensively on Bourchier's dispatches published in *The Times* and on his unpublished diaries and notebooks (in possession of his family in Ireland). Appendix contains appreciations by Ivan Gueshov, Eleftherios Venizelos, Lord Noel-Buxton and Chirol.

Helmreich, Ernst Christian: Diplomacy of the Balkan Wars, 1912-1913. (London, 1938.)

On p. 31-2, the name W. T. Stead should be substituted for that of H. W. Steed. (cf. I. E. Gueshoff: Balkan League, London, 1915, pp. 4-5.)

Rankin, Lt.-Col. Reginald: Inner History of the Balkan War. (London, 1914.)

Rankin was Special War Correspondent of *The Times* with the French Forces in 1908 and the Bulgarian Forces in 1912. Book is dedicated to Bourchier, who taught Rankin at Eton and in 1912 gave him an oral account of his early years in the Balkans. First Chapter is devoted entirely to Bourchier and his services towards the formation of the Balkan League.

# APPENDIX II:

# PRINCIPAL MINISTERS, 1885-1915

1. June, 1885-January, 1886—Conservative

Prime Minister: Marquis of Salisbury Chancellor of the Exchequer: Sir M. Hicks-Beach

Home Secretary: Sir R. A. Cross
Foreign Secretary: Marquis of Salisbury
Colonial Secretary: Col. F. A. Stanley
Secretary for War: W. H. Smith; Viscount
Cranbrook

Secretary for India: Lord R. Churchill Lord Lieutenant of Ireland: Earl of Carnarvon

Chief Secretary for Ireland: Sir W. Hart-Dyke; W. H. Smith

2. February-July, 1886-Liberal

Prime Minister: W. E. Gladstone
Chancellor of the Exchequer: Sir W.
Harcourt
Home Secretary: H. C. E. Childers
Foreign Secretary: Earl of Rosebery
Colonial Secretary: Earl Granville
Secretary for War: H. Campbell-

Bannerman
Secretary for India: Earl of Kimberley
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland: Earl of
Aberdeen

Chief Secretary for Ireland: John Morley

3. July, 1886-August, 1892-Conservative

Prime Minister: Marquis of Salisbury Chancellor of the Exchequer: Lord R. Churchill (1886); G. J. Goschen Home Secretary: H. Matthews

Foreign Secretary: Earl of Iddesleigh (1886-7); Prime Minister

Colonial Secretary: E. Stanhope (1886-7); Lord Knutsford

Secretary for War: W. H. Smith (1886-7); E. Stanhope

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland: Marquis of Londonderry (1886-89); Earl of Zetland

Chief Secretary for Ireland: Sir M. Hicks-Beach (1886-7); A. J. Balfour (1887-91); W. L. Jackson 4. August, 1892-March, 1894-Liberal

Prime Minister: W. E. Gladstone
Chancellor of the Exchequer: Sir W.
Harcourt

Home Secretary: H. H. Asquith
Foreign Secretary: Earl of Rosebery
Colonial Secretary: Marquis of Ripon
Secretary for War: H. CampbellBannerman

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland: Lord Houghton

Chief Secretary for Ireland : John Morley

5. March, 1894-June, 1895-Liberal

Prime Minister: Earl of Rosebery

Chancellor of the Exchequer: Sir W.

Harcourt

Home Secretary: H. H. Asquith
Foreign Secretary: Earl of Kimberley
Colonial Secretary: Marquis of Ripon
Secretary for War: Sir H. CampbellBannerman

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland: Lord Houghton Chief Secretary for Ireland: John Morley

6. June, 1895-November, 1900-Unionist

Prime Minister: Lord Salisbury
Chancellor of the Exchequer: Sir M.
Hicks-Beach

Home Secretary: Sir M. W. Ridley
Foreign Secretary: Prime Minister
Colonial Secretary: Joseph Chamberlain
Secretary for War: Lord Lansdowne
Secretary for India: Lord G. Hamilton
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland: Lord Cadogan
Chief Secretary for Ireland: G. W.
Balfour

# PRINCIPAL MINISTERS, 1885-1915

#### 7. November, 1900-July 11, 1902-Unionist

Prime Minister: Lord Salisbury
Chancellor of the Exchequer: Sir M.
Hicks-Beach
Home Secretary: C. T. Ritchie
Foreign Secretary: Lord Lansdowne
Colonial Secretary: Joseph Chamberlain
Secretary for War: W. St. J. Brodrick
Secretary for India: Lord G. Hamilton
Lord Leiutenant of Ireland: Lord Cadogan
Chief Secretary for Ireland: George

### 8. July, 1902-December, 1905-Unionist

Wyndham

Prime Minister: A. J. Balfour
Chancellor of the Exchequer: Sir M.
Hicks-Beach (1902); C. T. Ritchie
(1902-3); J. Austen Chamberlain
Home Secretary: C. T. Ritchie (1902);
A. Akers-Douglas
Foreign Secretary: Lord Lansdowne
Colonial Secretary: Joseph Chamberlain
(1902-3); A. Lyttelton
Secretary for War: W. St. J. Brodrick
(1902-3); H. O. Arnold-Forster
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland: Earl of
Dudley
Chief Secretary for Ireland: George
Wyndham (1902-5): W. H. Long

9. December, 1905-April, 1908-Liberal

Prime Minister: Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman

Chancellor of the Exchequer: H. H. Asquith

Home Secretary: H. J. Gladstone Foreign Secretary: Sir E. Grey Colonial Secretary: Farl of Floin

Secretary for War: R. B. Haldane Secretary for India: John Morley

First Lord of the Admiralty: Lord Tweedmouth

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland: Earl of Aberdeen

Chief Secretary for Ireland: James Bryce (1906-7); A. Birrell

## 10. April, 1908-January, 1910-Liberal

Prime Minister: H. H. Asquith
Chancellor of the Exchequer: D. Lloyd
George
Home Secretary: H. J. Gladstone
Foreign Secretary: Sir E. Grey
Colonial Secretary: Earl of Crewe
Secretary for War: R. B. Haldane
Secretary for India: John Morley
First Lord of the Admiralty: R. McKenna
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland: Earl of
Aberdeen

Chief Secretary for Ireland: A. Birrell

#### 11. January, 1910-May, 1915-Liberal

Prime Minister: H. H. Asquith
Chancellor of the Exchequer: D. Lloyd
George
Home Secretary: Winston Churchill
(1910-11): R. McKenna
Foreign Secretary: Sir E. Grey
Colonial Secretary: Earl of Crewe (1910);
L. Harcourt
Secretary for War: R. B. Haldane
(1910-12); Col. J. E. B. Seely
(1912-14); H. H. Asquith (1914);
Earl Kitchener
Secretary for India: Earl of Crewe
(November, 1910-March, 1911);
Viscount Morley (March-May, 1911);

Earl of Crewe
First Lord of the Admiralty: R. McKenna
(1910-11); Winston Churchill

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland: Marquis of Aberdeen (1910-15); Lord Wimborne Chief Secretary for Ireland: A. Birrell

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